Saipan Awaodori Team represents Saipan in Japan. PAGE 2
Rotaract Club of Saipan installs new set of officers. PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

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PALACIOS ON AG DISQUALIFICATION:

'I'll step up to the plate if I have to'

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios says that he will step up to the plate should the Supreme Court maintain its ruling disqualifying the Office of the Attorney General from prosecuting former governor Ralph DLG Torres and vesting in him the power to choose a new prosecutor.

Over a week ago, judge pro tem Arthur Barcinas disqualified the CNMI Office of the Attorney General, including assistant attorney general James Robert Kingman, from prosecuting former governor Torres' pending misconduct in public office case.

As part of the order, Barcinas deferred to the Executive Branch to "execute its

See STEP on Page 4

MGT Season 1 winners excited for American Idol auditions next month

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

Season 1 winners of the *Marianas Got Talent* are preparing for their *American Idol* auditions scheduled for Aug. 19, according to the newly formed Save the Music Foundation.

During a sit-down conversation with *MGT* Season 1 winners Sebastian Tajibmai and Bernice Shane Sabino as well as Save

See MGT on Page 4

CHRYSTAL MARINO
Marianas Got Talent Season 1 winners Bernice Shane Sabino and Sebastian Tajibmai smile for *Saipan Tribune* after an interview last Friday at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan in Garapan.

NAP: EBT card to launch in October 2025

By RACQUEL H. FLOYD
raxfloyd@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

The Electronic Benefits Transfer card is expected to be launched in October 2025, according to CNMI Nutrition Assistance Program administrator Margarita Aldan.

Aldan

According to Aldan, when she assumed the NAP administrator position on July 17, 2023, one of the challenges she faced was the preparation of coupons, which required a significant

See NAP on Page 4

DPL allegedly proposed 100% exclusive control to Marianas Global

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

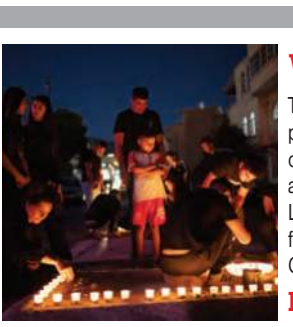
Local marine operators are fighting against the new rules and regulations for the commercial use of Mañagaha Island that is set to be implemented in August as it essentially gives exclusive control of the island to master concessionaire Marianas Global Inc.

According to a map included in the Department of Public Lands' proposed changes to the rules and regulations governing the

See DPL on Page 4

INSIDE

LOCAL
School's out, but the teaching continues for the Marianas Tourism Education Council and Marianas Visitors Authority, who took their presentations about tourism and hospitality to summer camp last Wednesday, July 24.
PAGE 5



WORLD
The Middle East braced for a potential flare-up in violence on Sunday after Israeli authorities said a rocket from Lebanon struck a soccer field in the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights.
PAGE 10

LIFE & STYLE
"Deadpool & Wolverine" made a staggering $205 million in its first weekend in North American theaters, according to studio estimates Sunday.
PAGE 11

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

Saipan Awaodori Team represents Saipan in Japan

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Saipan Awaodori Team poses with members of the Tokyo Tensuiren.

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
EDITOR

Three down and four more to go for the Saipan Awaodori Team currently in Japan performing in a series of Awaodori festivals.

Last Sunday, Cassidy Wabol, Coddie Forbes, Owen Quitugua, Vianny Mettao, Connie Mettao, Marcela Heben, Santo Baidya, and Leon Wabol took part in the Awaodori festival in Kitamachi, Tokyo. The previous two Sundays they performed in Awaodori festivals in Shirokane, Tokyo and in Ujie, Tochige.

Quitugua, a 17-year-old drummer making his first trip to Japan as part of the Saipan Awaodori Team, said performing in the Land of the Rising Sun is an amazing experience.

"Being my first time to perform I am really happy and excited to be a part of something so big and I am grateful for the opportunity to come here and represent Saipan and express the joy I have being a part of the Saipan Awaodori Team. I hope to perform again and make more memories and I hope others will join us on this wonderful experience together."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Awaodori Team drummer Owen Quitugua performs during last Sunday's Awaodori festival in Kitamachi, Tokyo.

Vianny Mettao, an 18-year-old dancer, said she initially had a hard time keeping up with the tight schedule at the beginning of the trip practicing and performing with Tokyo Tensuiren, but she eventually got the hang of it.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Awaodori Team's Leon Wabol, Vianny Mettao, and Marcela Heben perform with the Tokyo Tensuiren.

"I enjoyed the challenging performance with the Tokyo Tensuiren. It is a great opportunity to pick up my skills and get to learn more other dance styles to improve my dancing skills. Showing them how we play our flute is unforgettable and full of emotions. I am proud of our team and I can't wait for our other members to experience this amazing opportunity."

For 15-year-old dancer Connie Mettao, her second time in Japan performing with the Saipan Awaodori Team is still a wonderful experience.

"I was able to learn many dance techniques and got to have connections with the Tokyo Tensuiren team. I played 'Sakura Sakura' on the flute while dancers danced with joy and smiles on their faces. Performing is tough, especially dancing a long way, but seeing many cheerful and supportive people made me feel excited and forget how tough dancing is. I cannot wait for other performances in the future and see more of Saipan Awaodori Team in Japan."

Heben, another dancer, said this year's performances felt a bit different since it's the first year Tokyo Tensuiren president Rencho Iwanami isn't with them. Iwanami passed away last December.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Awaodori Team's Vianny Mettao poses with a poster of the Awaodori festival in Shirokane, Tokyo.

"If not for him, our team wouldn't experience how the Awaodori festival is here in Japan. He saw the potential in us and is the reason why we are able to be here in this wonderful country and amazing people. Every performance I tried my best to enjoy no matter how hard it is, it is more extreme than performing on Saipan, but with all the cheers and smiles surrounding me, I forgot the physical pain I'm in. Overall, I enjoy coming back here every year, getting to know more and more about the dance and being able to perform with the new skills I've learned."

Another drummer, 19-year-old Coddie Forbes, said returning to Japan once again with the Saipan Awaodori Team just adds to his appreciation for being part of the team.

"This is my second time in Japan. It's better because I'm getting to know everyone more and getting close to them. I love learning Japanese culture. I was anxious about performing using a big drum with the group being from Saipan, but with their encouragement and support I feel relaxed. My performance has improved and my skill level increased, now I feel comfortable using bigger drums."

Saipan Awaodori Team president Misako Kamata, for her part, said she's very proud of the Saipan Awaodori Team that performed the last three Sundays in Japan.

"Every time our local children perform here in Japan, they always capture the audience's attention and leave a lasting impression. Even though they do not speak the same language, still they were able to perform together. I can see that these children now truly understand Japanese culture through dance and music performance."

Next up for Kamata and company is the Higashi Awaodori Festibval in Rinkan, Tokyo on Aug. 3, followed by the main performances in the Koenji Tokyo Awaodori Festival from Aug. 23 to 25.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Awaodori Team's Leon Wabol, Marcela Hebe, and Vianny and Connie Mettao perform with the Tokyo Tensuiren.

World
Breastfeeding Week
BREASTFEEDING CHAMPIONS
What made you choose to breastfeed?
"Breastfeeding was honestly not my first choice as I had a busy work schedule, but my doctor and nurses highly recommended it. They informed me how much it can benefit me and my child. Of course, as a first-time mom at the time I wanted to do anything and everything possible for my child. So, I made it work regardless of anything."
If you could offer one piece of advice to new moms that are thinking of breastfeeding, what would that be?
"Hey mamas-to-be, I have breastfed all six of my babies from newborn to 2 years old. I am currently breastfeeding my youngest baby and she is healthy and growing quick. Breastfeeding may seem scary and a lot of work, but it will all be worth it in the end.
The first few weeks may be a pain but as you continue, that pain will subside and eventually it will become natural to you. The nutrients from breastfeeding really helps with your baby's immune system and also prevents them from being sick too often."
Ronica Atalig,
Rota, CNMI
Mom of 6
"The bond you get from breastfeeding is like no other. Don't give up. Give it a try."
Join us celebrate World Breastfeeding Week!
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Aug. 2, 2024 | 10:00AM - 2:00PM
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Rotaract Club of Saipan installs new set of officers

RACQUEL FLOYD

The Rotaract Club of Saipan's new set of officers were installed last Saturday evening at Azucena Hall of Crown Plaza Resort Saipan.

By RACQUEL H. FLOYD
raxfloyd@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

The Rotaract Club of Saipan held its 9th Installation and Handover Ceremony last Saturday evening at the Azucena Hall of Crown Plaza Resort Saipan.

The event was graced by Rotary Club of Saipan president Joann Aquino, New Generation director Greg Borja, Rep. Thomas Maglona II (R-Saipan), Rotaract Club members, and Interact Club members.

Rotaract Club of Saipan installed Genelin Anne Camacho as its new president and Community Service director, Arriane Maricar Antonio as vice president and treasurer, Hilary Denise Agulto as Club Service director, and Simon Jed Necesito as International Service director.

The program started after the dinner, opened by a speech from Rotaract immediate past president Richard Baleares. Beleares' speech marks the first time in three years that the opening remarks of the installation ceremony was delivered by an actual outgoing president. He also shared in his speech his club's journey and growth, wherein Rotaract faced challenges like COVID-19 and exam weeks.

"Throughout my three years as president, while we've grown, shrunk, and grown again in membership, it faced challenges such as COVID and final exam week, and many other things, there was a lot of trial in there. There are periods where the club wasn't as active as I want, as I like it to be," said Baleares.

Manglona delivered the inspirational message where he mentioned that he was grateful to Rotaract for choosing him and that he was supposed to attend a family wedding in Guam, but opted to attend the ceremony instead.

Manglona shared his journey working for the Governor's Office (administration of former governor Ralph DLG Torres) as a public information officer. He mentioned being motivated to work there due to his interest in government and curiosity about its inner workings. He considered it one of his greatest experiences and played a significant role in establishing his first-ever media office.

"Wake up in the morning, go to work, and just do whatever it takes to make our island a better place in whatever capacity to have and then I had an opportunity to run for office," Manglona said.

Manglona also discussed community organizations as a motivational force, due to their selfless actions and passion despite the challenges and obstacles.

"I always look at community organizations as motivation because you guys do it out of love," said Manglona.

In addition, Manglona reflected on his struggles, including losing everything and being a single father, but despite those challenges he chooses to serve the community. He expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to continue serving the community at the end of his speech.

New Generation director Greg Borja delivered his remarks and emphasized how he was inspired by the Rotaracts as well as he will continue to be an inspiration to the community by sharing the magic of Rotary.

"I just want to let you all know that you are an inspiration to me to be a better Rotarian and I thank you for that. Congratulations to your incoming officers. Congratulations on your citation and you know, in growing your membership from about 18 to 35, you've become an inspiration for everyone. I'm still going to continue to be the inspiration in our community by sharing the magic of Rotary."

Rotary president Joann T. Aquino then delivered her words of wisdom and said, "The real magic of Rotary isn't about wands or magic words but in the hearts and hands of its members—in you. You have the power to make ordinary things into extraordinary, to bring darkness into light."

During president Genelin Camacho's acceptance speech, she expressed gratitude to the Rotaractors for demonstrating fellowship through service. Camacho recounted her personal journey to serve the community through Rotaract after high school, while reflecting on the club's growth and changes over the past decade.

"I would like to thank our Rotaractors. You are the embodiment of fellowship through service which is our international model. I fondly remember back 11 to 12 years ago when I first heard about Rotaract, through a brochure at the old NMC bookstore. Prior to that I have been looking for a way to serve my community, but I was not sure how to start, because I was inactive for three to five years after high school. Fast forward, I now stand with you along with our Interactors, Rotarians, and guests as we celebrate our first decade of service in the Marianas. Please give yourselves a round of applause."

The ceremony also included distribution of certificates to the following members: Hillary Denies Agulto, Arriane Antonio, Cameron Atalig, Richard Baleares, Melissa Borja, Genelin Ann Camacho, Michael Anthony Camacho, Richelle Caponpon, Princes Castro, Clyde Concubierta, Eloise Lopez, Jadrien Lontoc, Matthew Manuel, Jimmy Marquez, Simon Necesito, Mark Pangelinan, Kaeli Pathil, Camille Quitugua, Jose Rabago, Abby Racoma, Angel Soguilon, and Kayla Yi.

RACQUEL FLOYD

Rotaract members hold their membership certifications during the 9th Installation and Handover Ceremony last Saturday evening at the Azucena Hall of Crown Plaza Resort Saipan.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Rehabilitation Council
P.O. BOX 501521, SAIPAN, MP 95950:
TEL: (670) 322-6537/8: FAX: (670) 322-6548: E-MAIL: nmidir@ovrgov.net

PUBLIC NOTICE

FY 2024 SRC 3rd General Membership Meeting
July 30, 2024 - 10:00am
Crowne Plaza Resort – Azucena Room

AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Roll Call
III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
IV. Review and Adoption of FY 2024 SRC 2nd General Membership meeting Minutes of June 28, 2024.
V. Review of Membership Vacancies/Reappointments
VI. Reports
(a) SRC Chairperson
(b) Committee Report
(c) OVR Director
VII. Old Business
(a) Update on Local fund match
VIII. New Business
IX. Action item:
X. Miscellaneous
• Next SRC meeting
XI. Adjournment

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals who wish to attend the meeting but requires accommodations such as large print or sign language interpreter to contact the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation at 322-6537/6538 or email jimbo@ovrgov.net in advance before the meeting.

Publication of this notice is paid for by federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (DOE,OSERS Grant #H126A240078).

UNITED STATES
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 12, the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities hereby gives notice that it will hold its 2nd Quarter General Membership Meeting on July 31, 2024 from 9:00am to 1:00pm at the Saipan World Resort, Sunflower Room

AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Roll Call
III. Review & Adoption of the Agenda of July 31, 2024
IV. Review & Adoption of Meeting Minutes of April 18, 2024
V. Old Business
a. Self-Care Awareness & Techniques Training for CLI Self Advocates Update
b. Fundamentals of Caregiving Training Update
c. Emergency Management & Disability Awareness Training Update
d. IntellectAbility – Reducing Risk Training for Clinicians Update
e. Mental Health Awareness Month Update
f. Disability Policy Seminar Update
VI. New Business
a. DIF Grant
b. UCEDD Summit
c. 2024 Disability Sport Festival – Saipan
VII. Reports
a. Chairperson
b. State Plan Committee Chairperson
c. Fiscal Committee Chairperson
d. Executive Director
VIII. Action Items
a. Review and Approve the CDD State Plan Updates: FY 2025 & FY 2026 Work Plans
b. Review and Approve the Proposed FY 2025 DD Basic Grant Budget
c. Ratify the Approval of the CNMI ATP's FY 2024 Final Grant Award Budget
d. Ratify the Approval of CDD's FY 2024 Final Grant Award Budget
e. Election of Officers
i. Secretary
ii. Vice Chairperson
iii. Chairperson
IX. Miscellaneous
X. Next Meeting
XI. Adjournment

Note: Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 13(a) 7, the Council may vote to meet in Executive Session.
In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend this meeting and require special accommodations are requested to call the Council 5 days in advance at 664-7000. The Public is welcome to submit written or 3 minutes of oral comments regarding the agenda above.

/s/ Concepcion Ulloa
Chairperson

This ad is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award total $273,990 with 100 percent funding by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

MGT

From page 1

the Music Foundation chair Arlene Reyes last Friday, they shared their excitement to represent the CNMI on an internationally known competition like *American Idol.*

"Honestly, it hasn't really hit me yet, but I hope it will later," said Sabino. "I feel like just more nervous and I feel like this is kind of like the biggest thing that I've ever done. Hopefully I can really pull this off. And yeah, I hope that I can make a name for myself and like even expose the CNMI even better."

Tajibmai shared Sabino's excitement plus some jitters as well. "Right now, I'm very anxious. But all that is in my mind now is to just train my voice and exercise my voice so I can do my best when the audition comes."

Reyes shared that there will be two steps in the audition process, one scheduled audition will be virtual, but the next one would be the televised in-person ones. When asked if a family member will travel alongside them if they make it to the face-to-face audition, Reyes said, "People have expressed interest in supporting Bernice and Sebastian's audition for *American Idol*. So, I'm sure that there's going to be people, and I know there's already some people that I've met who are willing to assist us in support. In many cases, it's usually just the person, the artist, or the contestant that's sponsored and not the family member."

She said in any event, Save the Music can do some fundraising for Tajibmai and Sabino.

"I don't want to say yes and no, but I will share that I would love for the mother or the sister or any family member that's going to be there to support, but I cannot guarantee that we're going to cover that expense. Because our priority is, of course, S.J. (Tajibmai) and Bernice. But we believe that having a support system is important so hopefully, we can get sponsorship for the immediate family member that's going to be there to show them the support. Even though I'll be there, it's even so much better when their family is there."

Sabino credited Reyes' hard work as the main reason they're heading to the auditions for the *American Idol.* "Thanks to Miss Arlene's dream and our dream, it kind of made everything possible."

She shared, "I didn't think I'd come this far considering the number of amazing singers that we had to come across during the *MGT* competition itself. It was quite the challenge, but being here, honestly, I'm just really grateful. And I'm grateful that God has given us this experience and I just hope that we can do what we need to do. This is it."

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

NAP

From page 1

amount of manpower.

"All of the staff here at NAP—doesn't matter what unit they're from—they come down and start preparing the coupons to be ready to be issued. It takes a lot of man hours so again everybody's involved in that process, except for the certification unit staff, because they cannot approve an application and then issue coupons."

Aldan stated that they are in the process of implementing the EBT card system, ensuring that it is compatible with both the NAP system and the contractor's interface.

"We are working and we have our contractors in place. We have contracts that are fully executed, but as you know, there's a lot of moving pieces with implementing the EBT card system. We're working with our system and then making sure the EBT system works with the contractor interface, things like that," said Aldan.

NAP Administrator Services manager Angel Demapan said that October 2025 is the projected date to go live with the EBT card. He emphasized that the change from paper to card involves both food stamp recipients and retailers as well.

"But many retailers should be familiar with the equipment because it will be the same as what they use for WIC (CNMI Women, Infants, and Children Program). However, when we get to the implementation phase in this timeline, they may not be aware of it. There will be training opportunities for the participating retailers, so our team and our contractor for the terminal will be out there to provide that training," said Demapan.

Demapan added that contracts with card services, hardware, and project management are underway.

"We have already begun contractual services with the card services company, the hardware company hardware. I mean with the programing hardware that we need to run the system and our project management contractor as well. So, all these things are underway and we're happy to we have this opportunity to update the public because I know it's been a long time waiting, right?" added by Demapan.

The current coupon system involves manual reconciliation and balancing, which can be cumbersome for retailers. Digitizing the system would simplify the process for retailers, government, and the companies, according to Demapan.

"I will think that it is something that they would embrace. Some of them were already on the WIC system, which is electronic, we see the amount of work, it takes to reconcile paper coupons and balance paper coupons on our end. So, we can only imagine that retailers also go through the same thing when balancing their sales for the day and preparing their financial reports for the month in the quarter of the year, and so I think this is an opportunity to digitize and automate the entire system, so that it's easier for them, it's easier for us, and it's easier for the government," added Demapan.

The automated system will ensure proper use of the government assistance benefit and Demapan would like to remind recipients of the benefit to use it for its intended purpose, which is providing food for the table.

"Good news is that we're going to have a greater, responsible, and proper use of these benefits, right? If it's not being used for its intended purpose, then it defeats the purpose of getting this assistance from the federal government. The automated system will make sure that these benefits are being used to what they're really intended for and that's to put food on family's table."

STEP

From page 1

prosecutorial authorities in the case," essentially vesting the power to choose a new prosecutor in this case to Palacios.

In an interview with Palacios, he said currently, the OAG is appealing Barcinas' ruling with the Supreme Court.

"The Attorney General is appealing that court decision, until such time that that decision is made on the appeal, I think it would be appropriate of me not to comment on it yet. We'll see, we'll cross the bridge when we get there," he said.

However, when asked should Barcinas' ruling be reaffirmed by the high court, Palacios said he would step up to the plate.

"I'm going to have to step to the plate and look for guidance from folks and even the Judiciary. We'll see what happens when we get there," he said.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, the legal challenges on the Torres case began in December 2021 when a Democrat-Independent-led House Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee found then-governor Torres, a Republican, in contempt of a legislative subpoena for refusing to appear before the panel investigating his public expenditures.

On April 8, 2022, the OAG charged Torres with 12 counts of misconduct in public office and one count of theft, relating to the issuance of premium class airline tickets for himself and his wife, Diann T. Torres. Additionally, the OAG alleged one count of contempt for failing to comply with a legislative subpoena. Torres has consistently denied these charges.

Then-judge pro tem Alberto Tolentino dismissed the contempt charge against Torres on Aug. 23, 2022, citing that the prosecutor, J. Robert Glass Jr., had been exposed to privileged information regarding the non-appearance to the legislative subpoena. However, on Oct. 26, 2023, Kingman refiled a separate charge of contempt and misconduct against Torres.

Torres' defense team, comprised of attorneys Viola Alepuyo, Matthew Holley, Victorino Torres, and Anthony Aguon, argued for reconsideration of the disqualification order. They presented multiple points, including the interlocutory nature of the order, errors in the court's reliance on House Legislative Initiative 17-2, misapplication of the Model Rules of Professional Conduct, the ineffectiveness of the OAG's ethical screening, and the lack of a meaningful hearing for Torres.

In his order, Barcinas agreed with the defense, highlighting clear errors and manifest injustice in the previous ruling. He noted that the charges against Torres were inherently tied to his official capacity as governor, contrary to the earlier determination that they were personal.

According to Barcinas, he found the OAG's ethical screening procedures inadequate. Attorney General Edward Manibusan had testified that he screened assistant attorney general Robert Glass from conflicts, but the judge found this screening to be insufficient and improperly documented.

In a related case, Barcinas found that Manibusan's involvement constituted "switching sides," leading to a broader disqualification of the entire OAG from the case. The judge also ruled that Kingman, having been influenced by Manibusan, was disqualified from serving as a special prosecutor.

With the OAG and Kingman disqualified, the court declined to appoint a special prosecutor, citing concerns over potential influences and deferring the responsibility to the executive branch.

Barcinas has scheduled a hearing for Oct. 14 at 10am via Zoom. Until a new prosecutor is appointed, all other issues in the matter will be held in abeyance.

DPL

From page 1

commercial use of Mañagaha Island, currently, a large chunk of the island is already designated the "exclusive concessionaire area" or ECA which gives Marianas Global 100% control of said area.

However, local marine operators expressed that with the new rules and regulations proposed by DPL, Marianas Global would have control of the entire island giving them the authority to ban food from entering the island, ban marine operators from servicing tourists on Mañagaha, and authority to ban the use of floating devices brought into the island.

"[DPL is] saying that we are at the mercy of Marianas Global. The map shows the area inside the red line that they lease from DPL. Now they say they have rights to the entire island. Please help us say 'NO' to these changes because if we don't fix it now, Mañagaha will be at the hands of an outsider who has absolutely no respect for our people and our culture," said a local marine operator on social media.

In a letter addressed to DPL Secretary Terry Santos from Elsa Duenas-Nieto, owner of the local marine sports operator Captain Nite's Boat Charter, LLC, she said she strongly opposes DPL's proposed changes as Mañagaha belongs to the people and must be shared with the people.

"I am writing this letter in opposition to the proposed changes to the rules and regulations governing commercial activity on Mañagaha that will be implemented next month. We are legitimate businesses, we pay our taxes, we have our permits, and we have a right to stay. This ocean belongs to all of us. Mañagaha can be shared by the people because it belongs to the people," she said.

Duenas-Nieto explains that the map provided by DPL to marine operators clearly indicated that the leased area does not extend out to the dock which is the starting point for most of the marine sports activities.

"Marianas Global can be exclusive all they want within the red line. Everything outside is open territory. And there is already a rule that solicitation on the island is prohibited. That is clear. [However] a few months ago [DPL] banned food and drinks from Saipan and DPL rangers were confiscating them from the tourists at the dock upon arrival. Do you even have the authority to search their bags? Maybe that's a question for the Attorney General's Office. Some customers came back earlier than scheduled because they were hungry and dehydrated because there was no food concessionaire out there. Why take it away if you had nothing to offer? There is your liability right there," she said.

As for outside marine sport companies, Duenas-Nieto expressed that activities don't affect Marianas Global or DPL at all.

"[DPL] will ban outside marine sports companies from doing business on Mañagaha. We do our business out on the ocean and not on the island. The Mañagaha dock is the pickup and drop off point only. Liability usually happens on the island, in the swimming zone, and around the island. I don't see how our activities affect Marianas Global or DPL unless injuries and accidents happen because of their negligence to provide safety measures while on the island. Anytime injuries or accidents happen to our customers while in our hands, it is our liability and responsibility," she said.

Duenas-Nieto, in her letter, also notes that since Marianas Global took over Mañagaha, operators have witnessed several violations of CNMI regulations and even laws

"From land clearing without permits, parasailing without [Coastal Resources Management] permits, anchoring floating huts into seabeds without permits, and I could go on and on. Not to mention delayed salaries, violation of labor laws, and unpaid services to vendors who provided services to them. Just unethical and unprofessional behavior and absolutely no remorse for their actions," she said.

Duenas-Nieto added that DPL should draw a line for Marianas Global in terms of the many alleged violations.

"So, to DPL, when and where do you draw the line? People are obviously going to oppose this so called bogus and ridiculous proposed changes because again, it only benefits Marianas Global and DPL and not the people. And now they want to be exclusive? Now you want to give them more power to control the island. To ban outside food and drinks, to ban other marine sports operators and to choose (other brand) floating devices that are not U.S. Coast Guard-approved for their swimmers," she said.

MTEC, MVA teach hospitality, tourism to summer camp kids

MTEC

Children and staff at the Division of Youth Services Youth Empowerment Summer Camp learn about tourism and hospitality from the Marianas Tourism Education Council and Marianas Visitors Authority on July 24, 2024, in Koblerville, Saipan. The outreach was also supported by PDI Inc, Chamolinian Cultural Village Inc., and Simiyan Marianas.

MTEC

From left, Leilani Marciano and Bina Marciano teach the "Hafa Adai" dance at the Marianas Tourism Education Council and Marianas Visitors Authority's outreach in Koblerville, Saipan, on July 24, 2024. The outreach engaged approximately 70 students with concepts of tourism and hospitality at the Division of Youth Services Youth Empowerment Summer Camp.

School's out, but the teaching continues for the Marianas Tourism Education Council and Marianas Visitors Authority, who took their presentations about tourism and hospitality to summer camp last Wednesday, July 24.

With a diverse lineup of activities, the MTEC/MVA team shared the message that "Tourism is Everybody's Business" with nearly 70 children ages 5-12 at the Division of Youth Services' Youth Empowerment Summer Camp.

With uke in hand, musician and MTEC board member Larry Lee led students in learning the "Hafa Adai" welcome song. Dance instructors Leilani and Bina Marciano took it a step further by teaching the accompanying "Hafa Adai" dance, with students quickly picking up the coconut-shell clicking routine.

Under the tents outdoors, banana print artist Brian Ruben conducted a follow-along tutorial, guiding the creation of numerous crabs and other designs. April Repeki and Nicole Tyquiengco of the dance troupe Simiyan Marianas taught coconut-frond weaving, helping the students weaving fish, hearts, and more, which they proudly displayed throughout the afternoon.

At another station, students imagined being either visitors or hospitable locals, waving their country flags and "riding an airplane" from Korea or Japan, having an "airport welcome" with shells leis and island maps, taking a "bus tour" with videos produced by the MVA to various scenic sites, "suiting up" with snorkels and fins for diving at Grotto and other sites, and enjoying one the most common culture practices in the Marianas—sharing food. Chamorro cookies, to be exact.

"The MTEC is grateful to the Division of Youth Services, especially Ms. Anna Rangamar, for inviting us to participate in the Summer Camp," said MTEC chairwoman Vicky Benavente. "Our young participants were treated to a typical tourist's experience in the Marianas. They had fun and they learned a lot from the local artists and musicians."

The outreach was strongly supported by cultural practitioners provided through Pacific Development, Inc., Simiyan Marianas, and Chamolinian Cultural Village Inc.

"It is important to preserve, promote, and perpetuate our indigenous Chamorro and Refaluwasch culture for our future generation," said PDI co-owner and MTEC board member Gordon Marciano. "Our "kutura,' 'kkosch' (culture) Chamorro yan Refaluwasch connects us all."

MTEC is a non-profit organization whose mission is to foster and improve community understanding of the visitor industry; to educate the general public, especially school students, about the value, social benefits, and economic contributions made to the community by the visitor industry; and to instill, improve and promote the "Hafa Adai Tirow" hospitality spirit throughout the community. ***(PR)***

MTEC

Children at the Division of Youth Services Youth Empowerment Summer Camp prepare for an imaginary dive at Obyan Beach with Marianas Visitors Authority Community Projects specialist Jack Aranda on July 24, 2024, in Koblerville, Saipan. The MVA and Marianas Tourism Education Council engaged approximately 70 students with concepts of tourism and hospitality.

MTEC

Children draw what they would like to share with a visiting friend during outreach of Marianas Tourism Education Council and Marianas Visitors Authority on July 24, 2024, in Koblerville, Saipan. The two organizations engaged approximately 70 students of the Division of Youth Services Youth Empowerment Summer Camp with concepts of tourism and hospitality.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

COMMUNITY GUIDANCE CENTER (CGC)
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES/TRANSITIONAL LIVING CENTER
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
RFP24-CHCC/CGC/BHS-TLC-026

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: AUGUST 13th, 2024 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)

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/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

INVITATION TO BID
ITB24-CHCC/WIC-020

CNMI WIC PROGRAM

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"PROCUREMENT OF VEHICLE"

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/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In Re the Matter of the Petition To Correct: Avelino Tandog III Petitioner(s)

] FCD CIVIL ACTION
] NO. 24-0293
] **NOTICE**
] **OF HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on October 2, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in Courtron 217A, before Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio.

Dated this 22nd day of July, 2024.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court

/s/
By: Deputy Clerk of Court

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950]
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

INVITATION FOR BID
PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-014-24

SUBMISSION DATE: JULY 30, 2024: 2:00 P.M.

"REPAIRS OF TYPHOON MAWAR DAMAGES AT THE BTM ROTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT"

THE BID PACKAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP AT THE COMMONWONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA) ACCOUNTING OFFICE, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BEGINNING JUNE 28, 2024. AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE OF $50.00 SHALL BE PAID TO CPA BEFORE A BIDDER MAY OBTAIN THE BID PACKAGE. PAYMENTS SHALL BE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, OR CREDIT CARD.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "REPAIRS OF TYPHOON DAMAGES AT THE BTM ROTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (IFB-014-24)" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR BEFORE 2:00 P.M., JULY 30, 2024. BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

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LEO B. TUDELA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE: _____

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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Mark Rabago EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
MEMBER
The Associated Press
Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

NATO needs better bridges—and bulwarks

Although the U.S. and its allies agreed recently to put Ukraine on an "irreversible path" to NATO membership, there's no avoiding the obvious: A Trump presidency could well render such pledges meaningless.

Former President Donald Trump has threatened to hollow out U.S. support for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization — even if Congress puts up some legal hurdles to pulling out entirely—while his running mate, Senator JD Vance, has been a prominent opponent of aid to Ukraine.

The alliance's future, not to mention Ukraine's, is therefore uncertain. That makes it all the more important that NATO's European allies move beyond vague pledges and bridge metaphors. They need to act decisively to ensure Ukraine can still defend itself.

Europe seems to be waking up to the challenge. Defense spending among European NATO members and Canada is up by 18% this year, with 23 of 32 members now meeting the group's requirement of 2% of GDP. (Poland spends more than 4% on defense.) The allies approved €40 billion a year of financial assistance for Ukraine and agreed to offer more training and military support, something the U.S. had been providing successfully but which risks disruption under Trump.

Yet all this is still catch-up work after many years of neglect; a sizable gap remains. Measures taken to reinforce NATO's eastern flank and boost the number of troops at high readiness were commendable but insufficient to defend the Baltic nations if they came under attack.

Indeed, if Russia wound up its war in Ukraine sometime in 2025, analysts reckon it would take all of two years for Russian President Vladimir Putin to rebuild forces and stockpiles sufficient to pose a serious threat to Europe. NATO's new commitment merely extends current levels of assistance for Ukraine; it's less than half the amount that Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg argued for.

The alliance's most important pledge at its last meeting—to expand defense-industrial capacity—was as vague as its promise to Ukraine. That won't do. Europe's unduly fragmented defense industry hampers both its support for Ukraine and its own capabilities. While procurement has long been considered a national responsibility, E.U. states need to look hard at the price of such inefficiency and underinvestment. E.U.-level efforts to procure ammunition show what's possible when cooperation wins out over narrow national interests.

Allies can also do more to hamper Russia's own defense-industrial capabilities, which rely heavily on sourcing machine tools, spare parts, software, microelectronics and other essential dual-use supplies from NATO countries as well as Taiwan, South Korea and elsewhere. Shutting down the holding companies and fronts that are funneling these supplies is painstaking but essential work.

Ukraine is belatedly receiving additional ammunition, air defenses and fighter planes, though supplies remain too stretched to match battlefield needs in most cases. Putin's bet (supported by North Korea, China and Iran) is that a distracted, disengaged and more China-focused U.S. will lack the will or the means to deliver decisive support to Kyiv, ultimately allowing Russia to dictate the terms of a truce. Should his bet pay off, NATO's own future credibility looks far less certain than its recent celebrations suggest.

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Biden's graceful exit shows how a healthy party should work

By FRANCIS WILKINSON
Bloomberg Opinion

Francis Wilkinson is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering U.S/ politics and policy. Previously, he was executive editor for the Week and a writer for Rolling Stone.

President Joe Biden delivered his after-action report to the nation tonight. His conclusion: Mission accomplished.

In an Oval Office address that was often moving, and mindful of this season's democratic peril, Biden unfurled a litany of achievements. But he made it clear that in the wake of departing the Democratic ticket he intends to occupy the high ground of democracy, now and in history. "I revere this office," he said. "But I love my country more."

The speech allowed the president to put his own belated imprint on the remarkable weeks following his poor debate performance on June 27, when an emergent power, a sprawling, divergent collection of people and aspirations known as the Democratic Party, displaced Biden as the party's principal power. Biden and his top staff resisted the hive mind, but could not overcome it. When at last Biden relented, announcing his withdrawal from the race, the party speedily rallied around his successor, endorsee and most obvious replacement, Vice President Kamala Harris. American politics remains full of surprises.

Biden no doubt didn't enjoy having his ride to November rescinded. But "the sacred cause of this country is larger than any one of us," he said, and "nothing can come in the way of saving our democracy. That includes personal ambition." Biden's voluntary relinquishment of power will have long reputational benefits. Democrats who feared Biden might don Jimmy Carter's one-term cardigan are now fitting him for George Washington's wig.

All of this is evidence that Biden leads—well, led—a healthy political party. The president's acquiescence to former Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other influential Democrats was the result of a high-wire act in which party leaders skillfully coordinated, prodding the president's withdrawal without ever renouncing him. In the end, game respected game: Biden withdrew. The Democratic rank and file, two-thirds of whom said they wanted a new candidate, endorsed the move with an historic gush of donations and enthusiasm.

Georgetown University political scientist Hans Noel, co-author of The Party Decides, an influential book about how parties and their elites select candidates, told me in an email: "The main point of our book was not that the party could force any outcome, but rather that party leaders care about who the nominee is and are capable of coordinating to try to influence the outcome. And that's what happened here, both in encouraging Biden to step aside and in coalescing around Harris."

Noel's co-author, University of Maryland political scientist David Karol, added, "It reflects the strength of the Democratic Party, unified by hatred and fear of Trump, that they got him to withdraw in an unprecedented way with only a few weeks of awkwardness."

That success stands in sharp contrast to the failure of Republican elites to protect their party, and the nation, from the demagogue who has dominated GOP politics for eight years, transforming much of the party base into a personality cult.

As Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, authors of How Democracies Die, wrote, "An essential test for democracies is not whether such figures emerge but whether political leaders, and especially political parties, work to prevent them from gaining power in the first place—by keeping them off mainstream party tickets, refusing to endorse or align with them and, when necessary, making common cause with rivals in support of democratic candidates."

Examples of Republican bravery—former Representative Liz Cheney comes quickly to mind—have been exceedingly rare. "Isolating popular extremists requires political courage," Levitsky and Ziblatt wrote. "But when fear, opportunism or miscalculation leads established parties to bring extremists into the mainstream, democracy is imperiled."

Ultimately, it was that Republican failure that inspired the Democratic Party's success in convincing Biden to cede to Harris. In his remarks, Biden tacitly endorsed the party's action. "The defense of democracy is more important than any title," Biden said.

Would Democrats have moved in such unison, with such speed, if the Republican nominee for president were Senator Mitt Romney of Utah? I suspect not. A second Trump presidency promises a torrent of lies, corruption and a full-scale assault on both democratic values and institutions. Trump's authoritarian menace focused the Democratic minds.

Biden was, in one sense, the victim of that dynamic. But in a very powerful sense he is also its beneficiary. As Biden said Wednesday night, "The great thing about America is here, kings and dictators do not rule. The people do."

If democracy succumbs to Trumpist darkness and MAGA thrusts at "termination" of the Constitution, the memory of Biden's presidency won't be a source of much light. Biden rose to the occasion by thwarting his own ambition. The baton is passed. The mission is up to others. "Whether we keep our republic," he told the nation, "is now in your hands."

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The Olympics promise to be socially responsible. How's that working out?

By JULES BOYKOFF and DAVE ZIRIN
Los Angeles Times

Jules Boykoff, a former professional soccer player, is a political science professor at Pacific University in Oregon. He has written six books on the Olympics. Dave Zirin is the sports editor of the Nation and the au t hor of 11 books on the politics of sport.

Olympic host cities make promises that are all but impossible to keep, and in recent years, the organizers' wishful thinking about housing and neighborhood redevelopment has been one of the cruelest Olympic disappointments.

As the 2024 Paris Games approach, we are seeing it all over again—displacement, gentrification and the unhoused "voluntarily" lured elsewhere with assurances of help that never materializes. What will it mean for Los Angeles, when the Games arrive in 2028?

In 2017, when Paris and Los Angeles were the last cities standing as potential Olympic sites—Boston, Budapest, Hamburg and Rome all withdrew—the organizers promised to stage Games that sidestepped the vexing social problems that emerged in Seoul, Rio, Tokyo and London.

Paris bidders vowed to rejuvenate the city's banlieues, replenishing the housing stock by building an Olympic Village for the athletes in Seine-Saint-Denis, one of Paris' poorest districts, and converting large swaths of it into so-called social housing. In Los Angeles, then-Mayor Eric Garcetti stated on late-night television, "I'm confident by the time the Olympics come, we can end homelessness on the streets of L.A."

How has it worked in Paris?

In the lead up to the Games, French security officials are executing a "relocation plan" for the city's migrants, refugees and unhoused people, expelling them from their encampments and squats—and from fragile connections to jobs and community — and escorting them onto buses that take them to 10 cities around France where temporary shelters and services have supposedly been organized. A government official told the New York Times the number was about 5,000. Human rights groups expect many more of the estimated 100,000 Parisians without steady housing to be exported as far from Olympic venues as possible.

Officially, the relocations are meant to lessen pressure on the asylum application process and to help migrants more efficiently apply for refugee status. But of course, this is all about optics. Most of those banished from Paris won't qualify for permanent housing in their new locations, and as for asylum status, one lawyer in France calls the busing program "an antechamber to deportation."

A recent report by a Parisian group whose name translates as the Other Side of the Medal documented a nearly 39% surge in encampment evictions in the City of Light in the year leading up to the Games, which open Friday. The researchers found that more than 12,500 people were displaced from Paris in 2023-24 alone. They have dubbed it "nettoyage social," or social cleansing.

The French government has denied a connection between the Olympics and intensified displacement. But an email from a government official, first reported by the French newspaper L'Equipe, stated that the objective of the mass clearances was to "identify people on the street in sites near Olympic venues" and remove them before the Games commence. French National Assembly member Aurélie Trouvé told us that the program "is definitely connected to the Games and the need to offer a 'clean,' idealized image, even though it means that thousands of people are pushed afar."

Trouvé's district, Seine-Saint-Denis, north of the city center, is the Paris département most affected by the Games. It's home to a new Aquatic Center and the Olympic Village — block after block of apartments and commercial space constructed on what was industrial land. But it remains to be seen whether it will help the 1.6 million residents of Seine-Saint-Denis, one-third of whom live below the poverty line, or simply push them aside. About 40% of the district lives in social housing; only a quarter of the Olympic Village units are earmarked for that population after the Games.

Meanwhile, in Los Angeles, the organizers of LA28 have steered clear of direct Games-associated urban renewal — no new venues will be built under LA28's auspices and UCLA's dorms and campus will become the Olympic Village.

And of course, Garcetti's confidence about a homelessness cure is long forgotten. After Mayor Karen Bass checked out Paris' preparations earlier this year, she told a reporter she was merely "hopeful" the Olympics would "be a catalyst to L.A. finally addressing homelessness in a way that is long-term, that eventually ends street homelessness." She did offer this "major commitment": The unhoused wouldn't be moved to the hinterlands during the Games.

In December, a year into Bass's Inside Safe program to address homelessness, just under 2,000 people had been helped off the streets and into hotel rooms. And in June, the city's Homeless Services Authority announced that the latest point-in-time count found more than 75,000 unhoused residents in L.A. County, down a few ticks for the first time since 2018.

LA28 touts the legacy it will leave for the city and county but in a striking about-face from Garcetti's optimism, Casey Wasserman, the chairman of the Los Angeles organizing committee, has relinquished all responsibility for helping to reduce homelessness. He told LAist's Larry Mantle in 2021, "We're not responsible for solving homelessness. We're responsible for delivering the Olympic Games as a private enterprise in 2028."

Wasserman is only being honest. The Olympics can't solve gentrification, the affordable housing crisis or the needs of the unhoused. That's not what the Games are created to do. Promises made otherwise should be seen as public relations. That hosting the Olympics may even make matters worse is one reason so many cities were happy to leave the job to Paris and L.A. for 2024 and 2028.

In a few weeks, the hoopla and the tally of gold, silver and bronze medals at the Summer Games will give way to a much more consequential reckoning: Paris' winners and losers. It seems likely its most vulnerable residents won't have fared well. Los Angeles should take heed.

Global heating is no longer a tomorrow problem. It's today's

By MARK GONGLOFF
Bloomberg Opinion

Mark Gongloff is a Bloomberg Opinion editor and columnist covering climate change. He previously worked for Fortune.com, the Huffington Post *and the* Wall Street Journal.

For decades, global warming was widely seen as a tomorrow problem, something for our hapless grandchildren to worry about. But with heat records tumbling relentlessly, it's becoming clear that tomorrow has basically arrived. We are the hapless grandchildren. And it's also becoming clear that we're not ready for the heat.

Monday was the hottest day in recorded history, with the average global temperature hitting 17.15 degrees Celsius (62.87F), according to the E.U.'s Copernicus Climate Change Service. That smashed the previous record set way back on, uh, Sunday.

Before Sunday, the previous record was set in July 2023. In fact, the past 10 years have had the 10 highest annual maximum temperatures on record, according to Copernicus data going back to 1940. The highs of the past two years shifted into a new gear, crossing 17C for the first time. Last year, we could chalk some of that heat up to the El Niño weather pattern, which tends to raise global temperatures. But El Niño has ended, and the mercury is still alarmingly high.

These are also probably the highest highs in roughly 125,000 years. As climate-change deniers never tire of pointing out, the climate has always been changing. That hot period 5,000 generations ago—when temperatures might have maxed out at 1.5C above preindustrial averages, roughly matching this past scorching year—was followed by a long ice age. After that, the planet naturally warmed to the pleasant temperatures in which human civilization thrived for about 240 generations, a golden age of agriculture, air conditioning and Stanley cups.

The bad news is that, thanks to that same civilization burning fossil fuels and spewing heat-trapping gases into the atmosphere, those pleasant temperatures are a thing of the past. We're on track to zoom past 1.5C of warming on the way to something closer to 3C, speed-running a process that would naturally take thousands of years. These may be the hottest years in recorded history, but they will also be some of the coolest we'll ever enjoy again.

Higher temperatures turbocharge the planet's weather engines, leading to more frequent and severe heat waves, droughts, wildfires and floods and increasingly destructive hurricanes and thunderstorms. As they rise, they will eventually melt ice sheets and raise global sea levels, eradicate Amazon rainforest, thaw boreal permafrost and unleash methane gas and ancient pathogens, kill the coral reefs and switch off the Atlantic Ocean current that controls Europe's thermostat. They will lead to mass migration and resource wars.

But the deadliest immediate effect is simply the heat itself. It attacks human health on every level and already takes more lives each year than every other natural disaster combined. The problem is so big and so insidious that we don't yet fully grasp its scope.

The more than 2,300 heat-related deaths in the U.S. last year were only those in which heat was an obvious contributor. A 2020 study by researchers at Brown University, Boston University and the University of Toronto suggested the true number could be more than twice as high. Uncounted global heat deaths could approach half a million each year.

Quantifying heat's threat to health is crucial but only the start. People also need to be better educated about its dangers so that they stop putting themselves in harm's way. That includes changing a cultural attitude toward heat as "something that should be willingly embraced, bravely endured, blithely ignored, or in the case of some marginalized communities, entirely deserved," Vox's Umair Irfan and Aja Romano wrote recently.

To their last point, the people most vulnerable to heat are the elderly, small children, people with underlying ailments and people who lack air conditioning. Formerly redlined neighborhoods have fewer trees and suffer the most from urban heat-island effects. All deserve better protection than they're receiving now.

Meanwhile, millions of Americans who work outdoors lack relief from the heat. Florida and Texas have made it illegal for local governments to require companies give employees regular shade and water breaks, because not dying from heat is woke. The federal government's Occupational Safety and Health Administration could save lives by imposing nationwide standards, but it has only just begun a yearslong rulemaking process.

And even OSHA's proposal announced last month, which drew virulent political backlash from Republicans, will leave 7.9 million public workers unprotected, Politico's E&E News reported on Wednesday. That's because the law establishing OSHA only gave it authority over private companies. Public workers must rely on states for protection, and 23 of them haven't bothered. Along with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's bizarre reluctance to consider heat waves natural disasters, these are oversights that Congress needs to fix.

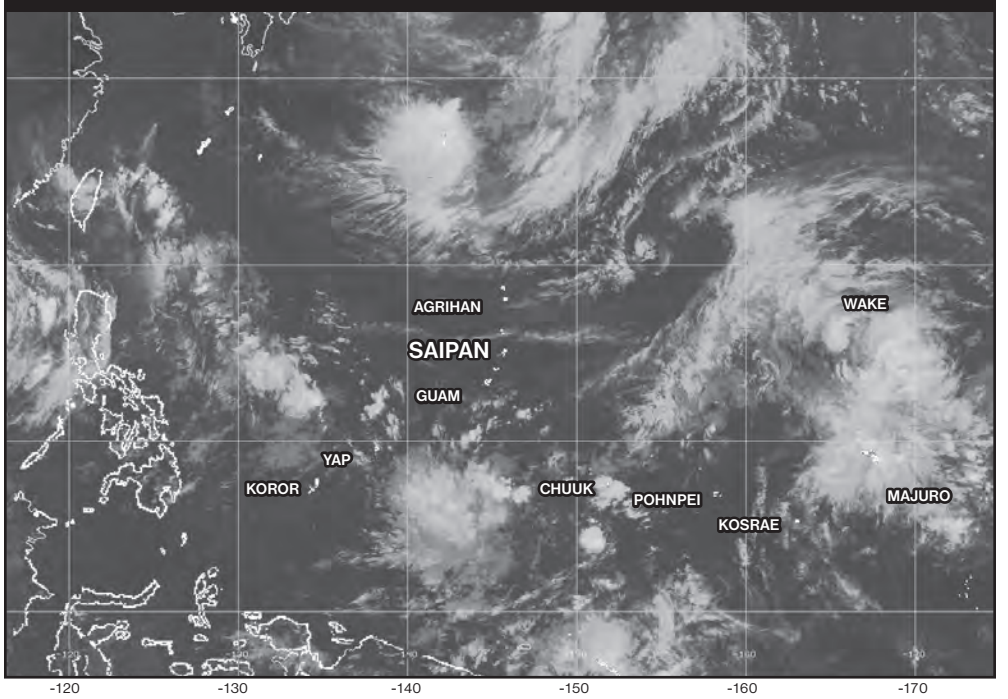
If Earth's atmosphere suddenly included a colorless, odorless gas that never went away and killed and sickened millions of people every year, we would consider that a public-health emergency on the scale of a pandemic and probably dedicate the whole of society to fighting a War on the Colorless, Odorless Gas. We should treat the permanent new state of global heat with no less urgency.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy. Isolated showers and thunderstorms. Light and variable winds.	Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers and thunderstorms. Southwest winds around 10 mph.	Mostly cloudy with a 50 percent chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with a chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with a chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.
88° 78°	87° 78°	87° 78°	88° 78°	88° 78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 9:15 AM MONDAY, JULY 29, 2024

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Partly sunny skies with scattered showers are seen moving through the Marianas Waters this morning. The buoys reveal combined seas of 3 to 5 feet, composed mainly of east swell.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	90° / 79°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	84° / 78°
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	86° / 80°
Chuuk	Cloudy	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	85° / 76°
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	85° / 76°
Majuro	Mostly Cloudy	85° / 81°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:58 AM	6:47 PM
Wednesday	5:59 AM	6:47 PM
Thursday	5:59 AM	6:47 PM
Friday	5:59 AM	6:46 PM
Saturday	5:59 AM	6:46 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	12:52 AM	2:16 PM	-
Wednesday	1:43 AM	3:16 PM	-
Thursday	2:38 AM	4:16 PM	-
Friday	3:35 AM	5:11 PM	-
Saturday	4:33 AM	6:02 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	57° / 50°
Beijing	Fair	90° / 75°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorm	84° / 77°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	88° / 77°
London	Partly Cloudy	88° / 68°
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	92° / 72°
Manila	Thunderstorm	84° / 77°
Melbourne	Showers	57° / 46°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	87° / 80°
New York	Partly Cloudy	86° / 71°
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	97° / 84°
Paris	Mostly Sunny	93° / 72°
Busan	Sunny	88° / 77°
Rome	Sunny	91° / 72°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	91° / 71°
San Francisco	Sunny	67° / 57°
Seoul	Cloudy	90° / 80°
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	99° / 86°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	90° / 69°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
1:53 AM	Low Tide	2.08
9:44 AM	High Tide	0.10
5:16 PM	Low Tide	1.77
9:37 PM	High Tide	1.48

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 1, 2024

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA076	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	11:50AM	2:25PM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	6:50PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:10PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

7C3403/2305	4:45AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily
7C3471	5:50PM	9:30PM	Daily from July 17

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX77	4:05AM	7:00AM	1, 5

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	5:30PM	9:55PM	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25PM	4:20AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:15AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
UA184	11:50PM	5:45AM+1	2, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA192/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	10:25PM	8:50AM +1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
7C2306/3406	11:10PM	3:10PM+1	Daily
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:50AM +1	2, 5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
7C3472	11:05AM	4:40PM	Daily
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
7C3404	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

HX76	7:25PM	2:35AM+1	4, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 2, 2024

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

4-H CAMP MAGA'LAHI

Tinian youth immerse themselves in learning and practical skill-building

Many enthusiastic summer campers ages 7 to 12 recently concluded a week-long adventure at this year's 4-H Camp Maga'lahi Tinian, held at the Fiesta Grounds from July 8 to July 12.

Guided by staff and counselors ages 13-19, campers were able to participate in an immersive experience that fostered teamwork and cultural exploration. The outdoor camp experience provided lasting memories and valuable skills for all participants.

Campers were launched into a week of summer adventures filled with engaging activities and exploring Tinian's various organizations. Themed days packed the camp program, allowing campers a chance to fully delve into activities dedicated to aquatic exploration, competitive sports, and hands-on healthy practices with the NMC Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services Nutrition and Health Program. They bonded with counselors through a range of activities including sports tournaments, a tour of the Commonwealth Ports Authority Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting station, and traditional talaya throwing and shallow bottom fishing. With days dedicated to recreational sports, healthy living workshops, and sustainable fishing, these campers were able to learn many new skills and expose themselves to Tinian's diverse opportunities for learning and exploration, fostering an enriching summer fun experience.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

4-H Camp Maga'lahi summer campers sprint to victory during one of their outdoor sports tournaments.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

House of Kepuha campers and counselors pose for a group photo together after winning the coveted House of the Summer award.

By the end of camp, the young participants participated in an awards ceremony where they were recognized and awarded for their hard work. The House of Kepuha was awarded with the coveted House of the Summer title.

A camp counselor reflected on their transformative experience with 4-H Camp Maga'lahi, sharing, "Camp was a fun and adventurous experience. I was able to connect with our campers and build a bond with them. Something I find really interesting about Camp Maga'lahi is the environment, there's always that sense of belonging and a sense of safe space no matter where we come from. I find myself a lot more open and it's something I never thought I could do."

A parent of a camper expressed their enthusiasm for 4-H Camp Maga'lahi, saying, "I think the 4-H Camp was a fun and enriching experience for kids of all ages. It provides an opportunity to connect with nature, try new activities and make lasting memories with friends. Camp was also helping our children build skills like teamwork, communication, openness and leadership.

Overall, I believe camp is a great way to break away from the routine of everyday life and enjoy some time outdoors."

"Summer camp offers a nurturing environment where campers and counselors alike can freely express themselves, delve into new ideas, and bravely step beyond their comfort zones through the 'challenge by choice' approach. Observing the outstanding leadership of our Tinian camp counselors, guided by Jacklyn Sanchez, as they actively involve campers in experiential learning, is truly inspiring." stated Family, Community, and Youth Development State/Territory Program leader Tayna C. Belyeu-Camacho.

4-H Camp Maga'lahi is conducted in partnership with the Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research Extension, and Education Services Family, Community, and Youth Development Program.

4-H Camp Maga'lahi Rota's session will be held from July 15 to 19, 2024. The Saipan Juniors Session 2 will be held from July 22 to 26, with the final Saipan Cloverbuds Sessions being held from July 29 to Aug. 2, 2024. ***(PR)***

39 PSS students earn distinctions as AP scholars

The CNMI Public School System recognizes 38 outstanding students who have showcased exceptional college-level proficiency by excelling in multiple Advanced Placement exams.

The CNMI public high schools offer a diverse range of both in-person and online AP courses, affording students a remarkable opportunity to immerse themselves in collegiate-level coursework. AP courses empower students to take on academic challenges and are designed to equip them with skills and knowledge to excel in higher education. Many colleges and universities in the United States and around the world offer credit or advanced placement to students who score well on AP exams. The College Board recognizes several levels of achievement based on student performance on AP exams and courses.

The AP Scholar with Distinction is granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.5 on all AP Exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams. The following students garnered the AP Scholar with Distinction Award: Joseph Victor B. Jimenez (MHS), Hannah Lim (MHS), Koey Pan (MHS), Jayden J. Shin (MHS), Gwanpil Son (MHS), and Jia Ross B. Nicdao (MHS).

The AP Scholar with Honor recognition is granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.25 on all AP Exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams. The following students garnered the AP Scholar with Honor Award: Jedric Aniciete (MHS), David Z. Cai (MHS), Si Jin Cheng (MHS), Mathea D. Deocares (MHS), Cindy T. Ma (MHS), Eunice Molina (MHS), Ye Z. Sablan (SSHS), Raja L. Sevugan (MHS), and Tian Si Xu (MHS).

The AP Scholar award is granted to students who receive scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP Exams. The following students garnered the AP Scholar Award: Justin Afable (SSHS), Alicia L. Barcinas (MHS), Alexis P. Cabrera (MHS), Sharon V. Calamaan (MHS), Devin M. Camacho (SSHS), Jaimer Shawne S. Casama (MHS), Aleeza J. Castro (SSHS), YuLing Chai (SSHS), Yu Xin Chen (MHS), Jhaylin J. Cruz (MHS), Danielle C. Formalejo (SSHS), Breseis Ann T. Guiab (MHS), Zhalick L. Hane (MHS), Tao Jin (SSHS), Sara E. Keaton (MHS), JIng Lin (SSHS), Sunny Y. Ma (MHS), Juruel Neilan P. Magtalas (MHS), Aiyana R. Manglona (MHS), Christopher N. Mauricio (SSHS), IG Kamiya Nicole N. Obnimaga (MHS), Bradley Zaike F. Ordona (MHS), Bomee Park (MHS), Kaitlyn S. Punzalan (MHS), Gabriel Angelo P. Retardo (MHS), Eden Marie P. Rodriguez (MHS), Yejin Son (MHS), Shamira Sulyman (SSHS), Julia L. Taitano (MHS), Pony K. Tang (MHS), Simon D. Tang (SSHS), Jenny Zhang (MHS), and Kelly Zheng (MHS).

The AP International Diploma is awarded to students who display exceptional achievement across a variety of disciplines. The following students garnered the AP International Diploma: Koey Pan (MHS) and Jayden J. Shin (MHS).

The AP Capstone Diploma is awarded to students who score a 3 or higher on the AP Seminar and AP Research exams and obtain a score of 3 or higher on four other AP exams. The following students garnered the AP Capstone Diploma: Danielle C. Formalejo (SSHS) and Ye Z. Sablan (SSHS).

The AP Seminar and Research Certificate is awarded to students who score a 3 or higher on the AP Seminar and AP Research exams. The following students garnered the AP Seminar and Research Certificate: Justin Afable (SSHS), Aleeza J. Castro (SSHS), Tao Jin (SSHS), Christopher N. Mauricio (SSHS), and Simon D. Tang (SSHS).

Last May, 361 CNMI PSS Advanced Placement students combined to take a total 561 AP exams across various subject areas: Biology, Calculus, Chinese Language and Culture, Computer Science, English Language & Composition, English Literature & Composition, Human Geography, Japanese Language and Culture, Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, Physics, Pre-Calculus, Psychology, Research, Seminar, Statistics, U.S. Government & Politics, and World History.

The CNMI Public School System congratulates these students on their exceptional achievements and wishes continued success to those who have graduated from high school. PSS looks forward to continued academic celebrations for students who are currently taking AP courses this upcoming school year. ***(PR)***

Editors note: Reprinted to add student inadvertently excluded.

Tuition free college available at GCC

Guam Community College is offering "Free College" for the Fall 2024 semester, in four programs: Construction trades, information technology, accounting, and education.

GCC's Free College will cover tuition and fees for students who complete the full two-year program. For applicants who qualify for Federal Financial Aid, the Free College program will help pay fees and costs not covered by FAFSA. Each program will accept a maximum of 20 students.

» Interested applicants encouraged to inquire at GCC campus

To qualify for Free College, candidates need a high school diploma, GED® Certification, or high school equivalency. Participants must also apply for the FAFSA. Individuals who have already obtained a degree or certificate from an accredited program are not qualified for the Free College program.

Applications for the Free College programs are available at the GCC Mangilao campus in The Administration Building (#2000) Monday through Friday between 8am and 5pm. GCC will continue accepting applications for each program until each cohort is filled. Visit the GCC website at www.guamcc.edu/freecollege for the steps to apply.

For more information, call the GCC Admissions Office at (671) 735-5531 extension 5533/5534, or visit the GCC Admissions office in Building 2000 on the GCC campus in Mangilao from 8am to 5pm, Monday through Fridays to apply. ***(PR)***

Nation

Trump, Harris enter 99-day sprint to decide an election

ST. CLOUD, Minn. (AP)—Barely a week ago, a sense of inevitability hung over the U.S. presidential election.

Donald Trump's allies gleefully predicted a landslide victory during a Republican National Convention that felt more like a coronation for a nominee who had just survived an assassination attempt and was promising to unite the country. Democrats, desperate and listless, feared the worst as a diminished President Joe Biden clung to his party's nomination.

But over the last seven days, a week unlike any other in American history, the 2024 presidential contest has been transformed. And now, just 99 days before Election Day, a fundamentally new race is taking shape featuring new candidates, a new issue focus and a new outlook for both parties.

Vice President Kamala Harris stepped in for Biden last Sunday and quickly smashed fundraising records, took over social media and generated levels of excitement that some Democrats said reminded them of the energy that surrounded Barack Obama's historic candidacy nearly two decades ago.

"This is potentially Obama on steroids," said Rep. Jasmine Crockett, D-Texas, who was among 40,000 participants on a Black Women for Harris call last week.

On the other side, Republicans are suddenly fearful and frustrated as they begin to accept the new reality that Trump's victory is no sure thing. And as their mood sours, the finger pointing has begun. Some prominent conservatives are openly second-guessing Trump's vice presidential pick, JD Vance, a little-known Ohio senator with less than two years in office and a well-documented history of provocative statements.

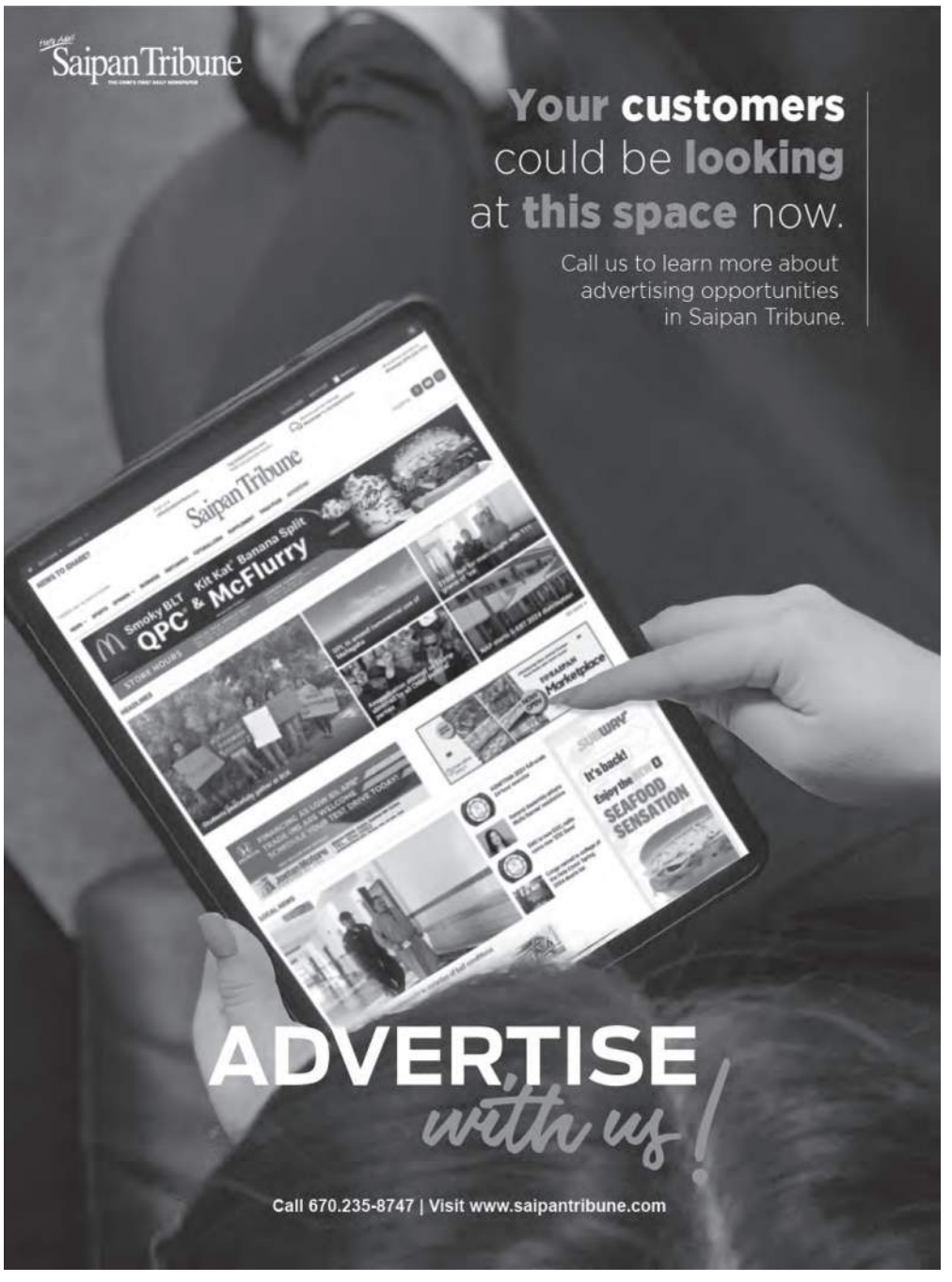
Just 12 days ago, Vance earned a huge ovation as he addressed the RNC in Milwaukee, where there was a strong belief that Trump could do no wrong in the wake of his near-death experience.

"We're light years away from where we were in Milwaukee," said Republican National Committee member Henry Barbour, who just a week ago predicted that the GOP might win the national popular vote this fall for the first time since 2004. He's not so sure anymore.

"The Democrats now have a candidate who can speak, who can attack. They have a weapon," Barbour said. "They have a path."

Conventional wisdom is often wrong

The incredible speed with which the election was transformed is a stark reminder that, in the Trump era, little is certain, and the conventional wisdom is often wrong. Even now, the Democrats' newfound confidence may be premature. Early public polling suggests that Harris starts in a slightly better position against Trump than Biden was just before his withdrawal from the race. But the numbers also point to a very close race in a deeply divided nation.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World

AFTER ROCKET FROM LEBANON KILLS 12 YOUTHS ON SOCCER FIELD

Israel weighs response to Hezbollah

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP)—The Middle East braced for a potential flare-up in violence on Sunday after Israeli authorities said a rocket from Lebanon struck a soccer field in the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights, killing 12 children and teens in what the military called the deadliest attack on civilians since Oct. 7. It raised fears of a broader regional war between Israel and Hezbollah, which in a rare move denied it was responsible.

AP

People light candles in memory of the children and teens killed in a rocket strike at a soccer field at the village of Majdal Shams, in the Israeli-annexed Golan Heights, Sunday, July 28, 2024.

The White House National Security Council said it was speaking with Israeli and Lebanese counterparts and working on a diplomatic solution to "end all attacks once and for all" in the border area between Israel and Lebanon.

The Israeli military said it struck a number of targets inside Lebanon overnight into Sunday, though their intensity was similar to months of cross-border fighting between Israel and the Iranian-backed Hezbollah. Hezbollah said it also carried out strikes. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Saturday's attack came as Israel and Hamas are negotiating a cease-fire proposal to end the nearly 10-month war in Gaza.

Here is a look at the broader repercussions:

What happened?

On Saturday, a rocket slammed into a soccer field where dozens of children and teens were playing in the Druze town of Majdal Shams, about 12 kilometers (7 miles) south of Lebanon and next to the Syrian border. Twelve were killed and 20 others wounded, according to the Israeli military.

"I feel darkness inside and out. Nothing like this happened here," resident Anan Abu Saleh said. "There's no way to explain this. I saw children, I don't want to say what I saw, but it's horrible, really horrible. We need more security." On Sunday, the coffins passed through a crowd of thousands. Photos of the youth were displayed at a roundabout as residents lit candles at dusk.

The Israeli military said it was investigating why the rocket wasn't intercepted and questioned whether it would have been possible due to its short journey and short reaction time. A bomb shelter was next to the blackened field, steps away.

The Druze are a religious sect that began as an offshoot of Shiite Islam and has communities in Israel, Syria and Lebanon. There are about 25,000 Druze in the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights, according to Yusri Hazran of the Hebrew University.

Ukraine says it struck oil depot in Russia, as Moscow claims new gains in Donetsk region

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—Ukraine on Sunday said it struck an oil depot in southern Russia that supplies the Kremlin's troops as Russian strikes in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, where Moscow claimed further gains, left five civilians dead and 15 others wounded.

Ukraine's General Staff said in a statement Kyiv's security services were responsible for a drone strike in Russia's southern Kursk region that morning on an oil depot used to meet the needs of the Russian military, and contains 11 tanks with a total volume of 7,000 cubic meters (about 247,202 cubic feet), adding the attack prompted "powerful explosions and a fire … probably involving containers with oil products."

"The defense forces continue to take all measures to undermine the military and economic potential of the Russian occupiers and force the Russian Federation to stop its armed aggression against Ukraine," the statement said.

Earlier Sunday, Russia's Defense Ministry said seven Ukrainian drones were shot down overnight over Russian territory, while a regional official said a drone strike set fire to the oil depot in the Kursk province. Firefighters were battling the blaze on Sunday morning after three fuel tanks went up in flames, according to acting regional Gov. Alexey Smirnov. Smirnov said nobody was hurt.

The Kursk region lies on the border with Ukraine's Sumy province where Ukraine has in recent months repeatedly targeted various sites, including oil depots and other military infrastructure, inside Russian territory, with drones and other weapons. Ukrainian officials have been pressuring Western allies to be able to use their modern and more sophisticated weapons to strike more valuable targets inside Russian territory.

Also on Sunday, Russian troops continued to eke out gains in Ukraine's war-torn eastern Donetsk province as they pushed westward toward the towns of Pokrovsk and Kurakhove. Russia's Defense Ministry on Sunday said that its forces had taken control of two neighboring villages some 30 kilometers (19 miles) east of Pokrovsk, Prohres and Yevhenivka. The day before, Moscow claimed the nearby village of Lozuvatske, one of nearly a dozen it says it has captured in the province this month.

Life & Style

‘Deadpool & Wolverine’ smashes R-rated record with $205M debut

Marvel is back on top with “Deadpool & Wolverine.” The comic-book movie made a staggering $205 million in its first weekend in North American theaters, according to studio estimates Sunday. It shattered the opening record for R-rated films previously held by the first “Deadpool” ($132 million) and notched a spot in the top 10 openings of all time.

Including international showings, where it’s racked up an addition $233.3 million from 52 markets, “Deadpool & Wolverine” is looking at a global opening of over $438.3 million.

Fittingly for both characters’ introduction to the Marvel Cinematic Universe, “Deadpool & Wolverine” played less like earlier X-Men or Deadpool movies and more like an Avengers pic. In the top domestic opening weekends ever, “Deadpool & Wolverine” is seated in 8th place between “The Avengers” ($207.4 million) and “Black Panther” ($202 million), bumping “Avengers: Age of Ultron” ($191.3 million) out of the top 10.

AP

This image released by 20th Century Studios/Marvel Studios shows Ryan Reynolds as Deadpool/Wade Wilson, left, and Hugh Jackman as Wolverine/Logan in a scene from “Deadpool & Wolverine.”

It’s by far biggest opening of the year, unseating Disney’s “ Inside Out 2 ” ($154.2 million) and the most tickets a movie has sold in its debut weekend since “Barbie” ($162 million) stormed theaters last July. Playing in 4,210 locations, “Deadpool & Wolverine” also surpassed 2019’s “The Lion King” ($191.8 million) to become the biggest July opening ever, and is the 34th consecutive MCU movie to debut in first place. And these are numbers previously thought impossible for an R-rated film.

“It’s great news full stop,” said Tony Chambers, who leads theatrical distribution for Disney. “Not only is it great for Disney, not only is it great for Marvel, but it’s great for the industry as a whole. We’ve said it before but success begets success.”

That the numbers came alongside an R-rating, Chambers added, was “nothing short of phenomenal.”

The Walt Disney Studios release arrived at a pivotal time for an industry grappling with box office returns that continue to run at a double-digit deficit from last year. Disney has played a vital role in the summer season, releasing the top movies in May (“Kingdom of the Planet of the Apes”), June (“Inside Out 2″) and now July.

The success is also an important moment for Marvel Studios, which has had several high-profile disappointments lately; Most notably in “ The Marvels ” which opened to an MCU low of $47 million last November.

Superheroes have been struggling even more elsewhere: Sony, which reached a high point with “Spider-Man: No Way Home” ($1.9 billion worldwide) had a new low with “Madame Web,” which barely crossed $100 million. Warner Bros. Discovery, after a string of disappointments with “The Flash” and “Blue Beetle,” is currently working on restarting their DC universe under the supervision of James Gunn.

Marvel’s savior came in the form of two characters who got their start outside of the MCU. Both Deadpool and Wolverine, played by Ryan Reynolds and Hugh Jackman, existed previously under the 21st Century Fox banner which for two decades had the rights to Marvel characters like the “X-Men” and “Fantastic Four.” That changed when Disney acquired the studio’s film and TV assets in early 2019 and plans started to take shape of how all these characters would fit into Kevin Feige’s MCU. In some cases, as with “Fantastic Four,” Marvel Studios is starting fresh. With “Deadpool & Wolverine,” directed by Shawn Levy, the stars were as crucial as their characters.

This weekend at the Comic-Con fan convention, Marvel also teased more to come, including Robert Downey Jr.’s return—not as Iron Man but as Doctor Doom. ***(AP)***

Robert Downey Jr. is returning to ‘Avengers’ films as a villain in 1 of Marvel’s Comic-Con twists

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Marvel Studios returned to San Diego Comic-Con with dancing Deadpool variants and a choir for a panel that included news about the next two “Avengers” films and surprise guests, including Harrison Ford and Robert Downey Jr.

Downey is returning to Marvel’s films, but not as Iron Man. He’ll play the villain Victor Von Doom, or Doctor Doom, in at least one of the upcoming “Avengers” movies. Downey kicked off Marvel’s movie successes in “Iron Man” and played the popular character in nine films, but on Saturday appeared wearing Dr. Doom’s mask and a green cloak.

“New mask, same task,” Downey said to frenzied cheers.

The Russo brothers, who will be directing the movie featuring Downey, said his appearance in the film is “proof of the unimaginable possibilities in the Marvel multi-universe.”

The reveal capped a jubilant return by Marvel to Comic-Con’s Hall H.

Marvel Studios President Kevin Feige kicked off the panel by saying that due to this weekend’s success of “Deadpool & Wolverine,” the sprawling Marvel Cinematic Universe had now topped $30 billion in box-office earnings. In a nod to a scene in the movie, a choir sang Madonna’s “Like a Prayer” before Feige spoke.

“Deadpool & Wolverine,” released Thursday, has already broken one record and could shatter more in its opening weekend. Feige used Saturday’s panel to chart the course ahead for the MCU, revealing Ford’s character in the next “Captain America” film and revealing “Avengers: Secret Wars and “Avengers: Doomsday” as the titles of the next two films in the epic superhero team-up series. “Doomsday” will hit theaters in 2026.

Feige said all the actors introduced Saturday would appear in the upcoming “Avengers” movies, which will be directed by Joe and Anthony Russo. The brothers guided the “Avengers” franchise through its sprawling storyline capped by “Avengers: Endgame” in 2019 that included the death of Downey’s Tony Stark/Iron Man character.

AP

Kevin Feige, from left, Joe Russo, Robert Downey Jr., and Anthony Russo attend a panel for Marvel Studios during Comic-Con International on Saturday, July 27, 2024, in San Diego.

Widow thinks invitation to livestream wedding is rude

DEAR ABBY: The daughter of a friend is getting married and sent an email announcement with a link to watch a livestream of the ceremony. I have never been invited to NOT attend an event before, and frankly, my feelings are hurt. (My husband was an incredible artist. Should I send a livestream of others enjoying his work in person?)

Does etiquette require I send a wedding gift? I would’ve understood not being invited if they were keeping it a small affair, but inviting a widow to witness a friend’s emotional, romantic moment in the solitude of her home seems cruel. Am I out of touch with what is socially acceptable?

NOT GOING IN TEXAS

DEAR NOT GOING: If the wedding is being held some distance from where you live, then the invitation to livestream was probably an attempt to be considerate. Today, many meaningful events are livestreamed, including funerals and memorials. If you would find watching the ceremony depressing and prefer not to “tune in,” then don’t do it. And, no, you are not REQUIRED to send a gift. (A sweet e-card congratulating the couple would be a nice gesture.)

■■■

DEAR ABBY: My brother is married to a very nice woman. It’s the second marriage for both, and they both work, although they do not handle money well. They have traveled to family events and ended up running out of money for meals, car rentals, etc.

My sister-in-law heard about a girls trip my daughters-in-law, a few close friends and I will be taking. She has invited herself along, and I don’t know how to politely tell her she can’t come unless she has the money up front to pay her share. It would kill me to hurt her feelings. Please advise.

RESPONSIBLE LADY OUT WEST

DEAR LADY: Who has paid for the food and car rentals that this couple didn’t have the money to cover? Were those relatives ever reimbursed? Unless you want to foot the bill for your SIL on this trip (to which she has invited herself), you’ll have to summon up the courage to tell her you will under no circumstances be doing that. If her feelings are hurt when you state the obvious (that you are not a pushover), so be it.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I am a 79-year-old woman. I have had a friend since high school who is five months younger than I am. A few weeks, sometimes months, before my birthday rolls around, she’ll come out with comments about her being several months younger. These comments hover between sarcastic and just plain mean.

I think she thinks she’s being clever, but after many years of this, it is no longer funny. When she makes a comment this year about my BIG birthday, what could my comeback be, in essence, telling her to knock it off?

SAME AGE IN FLORIDA

DEAR SAME AGE: How about this, spoken with a smile of course: “Oh, Honey, age is only a number. My birthday may come before yours, but you are RIGHT behind me. I’m trying out the number before you get there. At this point, I consider each day a blessing and so should you.”

■■■

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in “What Every Teen Should Know.” Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

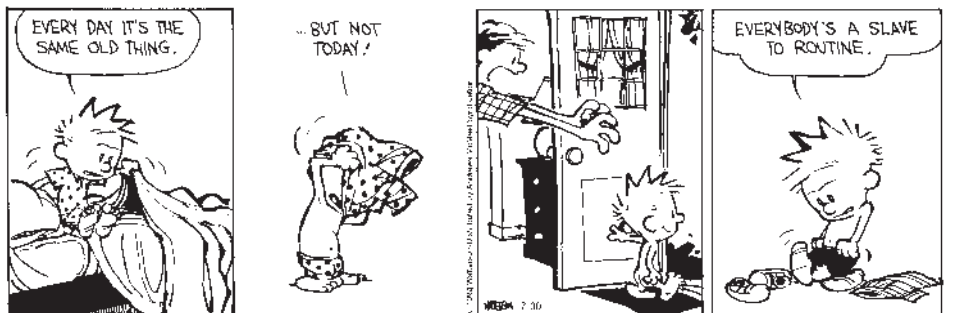
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis

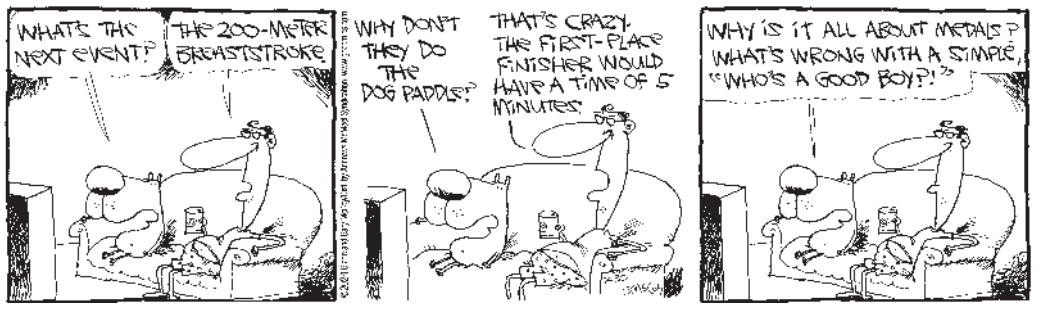
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

I AM THE KING OF COFFEE! LOOK AT MY COFFEE-INFUSED DIAMOND!
LOOK AT MY COFFEE MANSION AND ALL THAT I HAVE...
BUILT?
?
DANG IT.
WERE YOU WATCHING "NARCOS" BEFORE BED AGAIN?

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


WHAT'S THE NEXT EVENT?
THE 200-METER BREASTSTROKE.
WHY DON'T THEY DO THE DOG PADDLE?
THAT'S CRAZY. THE FIRST-PLACE FINISHER WOULD HAVE A TIME OF 5 MINUTES!
WHY IS IT ALL ABOUT MEDALS? WHAT'S WRONG WITH A SIMPLE, "WHO'S A GOOD BOY?!"

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Prolonged sleep
5 Gender prefix
8 Obi
12 Mimics
13 Docs' bloc
14 "Superfood" berry
15 Eats
17 Showy flower
18 Snake's warning
19 Mardi Gras VIP
20 Winter coasters
21 Punker Vicious
22 "Mayday!"
23 Coffee flavor
26 Allegiance
30 River in Tuscany
31 Candle dripping
32 City district
33 Signified
35 Salary
36 Bro or sis
37 Singer Orbison
38 Arthur Miller's Willy
41 Tibetan bovine
42 Former Delta rival
45 Acknowledge
46 Goes on vacation
48 Arizona city
49 Oklahoma tribe
50 Christmas tree, often
51 Bohemian
52 Laundry holder
53 GPS suggestions

DOWN
1 Beanies
2 Piece of work
3 "Miracle" team of 1969
4 Ninny
5 Made crow noises
6 Big-screen format
7 Verbalize
8 Leaves via a schooner
9 Land measure
10 Stated
11 Greet the villain
16 Opera house solo
20 Tofu source
21 Waves off
22 Boston team, for short
23 Frenzied
24 Metal source
25 Anderson Cooper's channel
26 Young bloke
27 Trail the pack
28 Three, in Rome
29 Fabric amts.
31 Spider's home
34 Badge metal
35 Stir-fry pans
37 Be a snitch
38 Tibetan monk
39 Exceeding
40 Lion's share
41 Bigfoot's cousin
42 Ninny
43 Fade away
44 Pro votes
46 Sailor
47 Earth Day mo.

Solution time: 22 mins.

C	A	D		F	I	F	N	A		E	T	S
P	R	E		R	I	L	E	S		S	H	O
R	E	F	U	R	B	I	S	H		T	E	D
			T	A	R		T	I	T	A	N	S
P	E	S	E	T	A		S	E	R	B		
E	S	Q		A	R	B		R	O	L	E	S
C	R	U	S		Y	T	D		T	I	L	E
K	N	E	E	L		W	I	N		S	B	A
		A	R	A	T		S	O	W	H	A	T
A	S	M	A	R	A		A	L	A			
P	O	I		G	I	B	B	E	R	I	S	H
E	D	S		O	N	E	L	S		R	K	O
D	A	H		S	T	Y	F	S		K	I	T

Yesterday's answer 7-30

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12				■	13				14			
15				16				■	17			
18			■	19			■	20				
■	■	■	21			■	22			■	■	■
23	24	25			■	26				27	28	29
30				■	31			■	32			
33				34			■	35				
■	■	■	36			■	37			■	■	■
38	39	40			■	41			■	42	43	44
45				■	46				47			
48					49			■	50			
51				■	52			■	53			

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Simon Baker, 55; Terry Crews, 56; Lisa Kudrow, 61; Laurence Fishburne, 63.

Happy Birthday: You'll be running on emotional fuel this year, contributing to what matters to you most and being the one to make a difference. Hold your head high, and continue until you are satisfied with your accomplishments. Being passionate will help you gain respect. A change of heart will encourage you to handle your financial, contractual and professional issues differently. Build a robust platform and shoot for the stars. Your numbers are 7, 23, 26, 32, 40, 43, 48.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Use your skills, knowledge and experience to make more cash. Promote what you can offer and expand your self-worth. Don't wait for opportunities. Think about how you spend your day and earn your living. Decide what success means to you, and take responsibility for your achievements. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 2-May 20):* Be careful how much you share. Get your ideas and plans up and running first and avoid a conflict with someone competitive. A change in your routine will help you avoid divulging secrets. Pay attention to detail; everything else will fall into place. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Uncertainty will taint progress. Show resilience and an eagerness to learn, and expand your options. Don't let a know-it-all attitude set you back or cause others to withhold information. Use charm, intellect and compliments to reach your goal. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Verify information before you pass it along. A backup plan is essential before you enter something with many variables. Knowing what you are up against and doing your research before executing your plans will ensure your likelihood of success. Know your limits. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Take stock of your reaction. Let your actions speak for you if you want to avoid interference. Reflect before you make the same move that has cost you emotionally. Change can be cost-efficient if you compromise or offer incentives to get what you want. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Assemble your thoughts before you present your ideas. You'll have to jump through hoops to prove your point. Don't jeopardize your health or financial security. Aim to please, but don't pay for someone else's mistakes. Pay attention to detail, listen to suggestions and tighten up weak links. ✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Set standards and goals, and make a beeline to reach your target. Refuse to let procrastination and disappointment take over. It's up to you to make things happen and to follow through with a doable timetable and a plan that separates you from any competition you encounter. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* You may crave change, but before you launch your plans, invest more time in preparation and detail. Backtracking wastes time and will give adversaries a chance to outmaneuver you. Don't let anyone talk you into a scam that can limit your intake. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* You can test possibilities, but don't sign up for something you can't finish or for the wrong reason. Investigate and determine which path leads to a sustainable lifestyle. Set boundaries and avoid poor behavior and unnecessary conflicts. Take care of yourself first. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Investigate possibilities and explore options. Change can be a good thing and save you money. Take part in every aspect of decision-making, contracts and investments, and define your concerns. The input you offer will make a difference and help you gain respect. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Tidy up domestic matters before it's too late. Address issues concerning anyone who lives with or near you who may have a problem with your plans. A direct approach will show goodwill and help you impart incentives that appeal to those who may derail your plans. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* You aren't likely to get an accurate picture or complete presentation if you listen to second-hand information. Don't take anything or anyone for granted or structure decisions based on hearsay. Be secretive regarding your intentions until you have a foolproof plan. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are responsive, daring and robust. You are persistent and meticulous.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

2	4			1				8
1	3	9				6		4
	7				2		1	
9	5	7	3		4	1		
8	6		7					5
4				8	5	3		
	8				9	2	7	6
								9
	9	4		7		8		1

Difficulty: ★★ 7/30

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

9	4	2	5	1	6	8	7	3
5	7	3	4	8	2	9	6	1
8	6	1	7	3	9	2	4	5
6	9	7	8	4	5	3	1	2
3	1	8	9	2	7	4	5	6
2	5	4	3	6	1	7	8	9
1	3	6	2	7	4	5	9	8
4	2	5	6	9	8	1	3	7
7	8	9	1	5	3	6	2	4

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Difficulty: ★ 7/29

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

WALL SCONCES Solution: 8 letters

S	Y	C	D	E	H	S	I	L	O	P	M	A	L	L
W	D	D	Y	A	W	L	L	A	H	E	G	A	I	I
I	R	N	N	L	A	T	E	M	L	N	N	V	G	G
V	O	H	(E)	E	S	E	K	E	I	T	I	L	H	H
E	L	(M)	N	T	R	D	C	L	E	N	A	E	T	T
L	(O)	O	A	U	X	T	I	R	G	S	A	L	S	B
(H)	C	B	T	R	R	E	N	R	S	P	E	B	B	U
E	L	X	M	I	C	L	O	C	E	A	L	A	E	L
E	I	G	C	A	E	O	H	U	C	C	Y	M	D	B
F	S	V	N	T	M	R	P	I	T	E	T	M	R	S
K	F	D	O	I	O	H	T	P	N	W	S	I	O	H
S	L	H	O	M	W	S	C	L	E	D	A	D	O	I
E	A	I	E	R	U	S	N	R	I	R	O	R	M	N
D	M	O	O	R	H	T	A	B	O	T	G	O	D	Y
C	E	R	A	M	I	C	R	Y	S	T	A	L	R	S

© 2024 Andrews McMeel Syndication www.wonderword.com 7/30

Bathroom, Bedroom, Candle, Ceiling, Ceramic, Chrome, Color, Cone, Copper, Crystal, Desk, Dimmable, Direction, Electric, Extends, Fixture, Flame, Glass, Hallway, Home, Hotel, Indoor, Lamp, Lantern, Lightbulb, Lights, Living Room, Metal, Movie, Nickel, Outwards, Polished, Rods, Rustic, Shiny, Space, Stable, Style, Swing, Swivel, Tilt, Torch, Trendy

Yesterday's Answer: Home Runs

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 62 through 77, order on line at www.WonderWordBooks.com. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

Durant returns to US lineup, scores 23 points to lead win over Serbia

VILLENEUVE-D'ASCQ, France (AP)—Kevin Durant is back. And in his debut with the U.S. Olympic team this summer, he didn't miss a beat at the Paris Games.

Didn't miss much of anything, in fact.

Durant—the all-time leading scorer in U.S. men's Olympic history—scored 23 points on 8-for-9 shooting in just under 17 minutes of action Sunday, helping the Americans roll past Serbia 110-84 in the Olympic opener for both teams. It was Durant's debut this summer after spending about a month dealing with a calf strain, one that occasionally had him worried that he'd miss the Paris Games.

"I eased him in," U.S. coach Steve Kerr said. "He didn't ease himself in."

Not one bit. Durant had five 3-pointers in the first half, and a fadeaway at the buzzer as he fell to the floor gave the U.S. a 58-49 lead going to the locker room. He missed his only shot from the floor in the second half, but the U.S. defense had taken over at that point and turned the game into a runaway.

AP

Kevin Durant, right, of the United States, passes the ball as he heads out of bounds while under pressure from Marko Guduric, of Serbia, in a men's basketball game at the 2024 Summer Olympics, Sunday, July 28, 2024, in Villeneuve-d'Ascq, France.

"Oh, man," Durant said of the one shot he missed. "Felt good leaving my hand. I definitely wanted to finish the game perfect."

Close enough.

Durant was the fifth sub off the U.S. bench—the 10th man, essentially—on Sunday. It marked the fourth time in his last 1,320 games that he wasn't a starter, that span covering his one year of college ball at Texas, his 16 NBA seasons including playoffs and 53 previous games with the U.S. men's senior national team.

"We're talking about Kevin Durant as a sixth man," U.S. guard Stephen Curry said. "That tells you how good this team can be."

And Durant made coming off the bench look easy. Even at halftime, the reactions on the social media site X were pouring in with high praise:

■ "Just get KD the ball, pretty simple," Sacramento Kings guard Kevin Huerter wrote.

■ "KD ridiculous," Rhode Island women's basketball associate head coach Ali Jaques wrote.

■ Added Rich Kleiman, Durant's longtime business partner: "easy money!! what we talking about??!!!"

His teammates only added to the list of marveling after the game.

"He was excellent," U.S. guard Devin Booker said. "Actually, no, he missed a shot. I don't know what the (expletive) is wrong with him. It's good to have him back out there. We've been seeing him grind. We've been seeing him work."

Durant has been doing some post-practice work—including a traditional Miami Heat drill session—with U.S. center Bam Adebayo, the Heat captain and one of the best defenders in the NBA.

"If I'm making your shot difficult, against anybody else, it should be easy," Adebayo said.

"He's right," Durant said.

USA Basketball made the announcement that Durant would be available to play about an hour before the game. He missed all five of the team's pre-Olympic exhibitions with the calf strain, which happened a few days before the team convened in Las Vegas for training camp in early July.

"There's days where I had good days and then I had a little setback," Durant said. "I was nervous a little bit. The trainers calmed me down a lot, let me know what I was going through and I'm glad I was able to get through it."

Durant is bidding to become the first four-time Olympic men's basketball gold medalist. The all-time U.S. men's leader in Olympic scoring was on the teams that won titles at the London Games in 2012, the Rio de Janeiro Games in 2016 and the Tokyo Games held three years ago.

Durant returned to full-fledged practice last week. By Friday, his teammates knew he was good to go. By Sunday, everyone else saw it.

"Nothing he does is surprising," Curry said. "To shoot perfect in the first half—he had 21 or something like that?—is special. He's so used to this stage and he's the all-time leading scorer in USAB history for a reason."

Simone Biles and LeBron James shine as Americans step up at the Games

PARIS (AP)—On the first sunny day of the Paris Olympics, the stars from the United States shined bright.

Simone Biles and LeBron James dazzled, so did the U.S. women's soccer team. Torri Huske grabbed some of the spotlight, and Haley Batten made a name for herself by earning a silver medal in mountain biking for the best finish ever by an American rider.

Although it was French swimmer Léon Marchand who received the most boisterous cheers in crushing the field to win gold in the men's 400-meter individual medley, the U.S. had a strong Sunday on Day 2 of the Games.

Simone shines

Biles made her Olympic return three years after pulling out of multiple finals at the Tokyo Games to protect her safety, which prompted an international discussion about mental health, by powering through discomfort she felt in her calf to lead the U.S. women's gymnastics team into the finals.

Biles, Suni Lee and Jordan Chiles went 1-2-3 in the all-around during early qualifying, though Chiles will miss the all-around final due to rules that limit countries to entering two athletes per competition.

There's a chance Chiles will make the floor exercise final should she finish in the top eight. Lee is practically a lock for the beam and bars finals, with 2020 floor exercise champion Jade Carey in good position to join Biles in the vault final.

But all eyes were on Biles, who briefly scared an entire nation when she left the after her floor exercise and received medical attention. She had tweaked her calf in warm-up, but U.S. coach Cecile Landi said it was a minor injury.

She performed in front of a star-studded crowd that included Tom Cruise, Jessica Chastain, Snoop Dogg, Anna Wintour and Lady Gaga, who wrote on social media of Biles: "She nailed it, what an honor to be so close!"

LeBron James leads Team USA

Two of the most experienced Olympians on the U.S. men's basketball team, James and Kevin Durant, began the squad's bid for a fifth consecutive gold medal with a near-flawless performance.

Durant made his first eight shots and scored 23 points, James added 21 points, nine assists and seven rebounds and the U.S. rolled to a 110-84 win over Serbia in the Olympic opener for both teams.

James and Durant were a combined 18 for 22 from the field—8 of 9 for Durant, 9 of 13 for James—as the U.S. had no trouble with the reigning World Cup silver medalists.

Jrue Holiday scored 15, Devin Booker had 12 and Anthony Edwards and Stephen Curry each added 11 for the U.S.

Pool party

Huske knocked off world-record holder Gretchen Walsh in the women's 100 butterfly, using a strong finish to get her hands to the wall just ahead of her teammate in a 1-2 finish for the U.S.

The favorite went out with her usual strategy: start fast and try to hold on. It worked at the U.S. trials, where she set her world record of 55.18 last month, and she was under record pace at the turn.

But Huske chased her down in the race that really mattered. The winner touched in 55.59—about the length of a finger ahead of Walsh's time of 55.63.

When Huske saw the "1" beside her name on the scoreboard, she reached across the lane rope to give Walsh and hug while breaking down in tears.

Marchand, meanwhile, lived up to the huge expectations at his home Olympics with a flag-waving crowd cheering his every stroke. He was under world-record pace on the final turn but faded a bit coming home, touching in 4 minutes, 2.95 seconds—an Olympic record, but just shy of his own world mark of 4:02.50.

Marchand claimed that mark at last year's world championships in Fukuoka, Japan, erasing a record held by Michael Phelps for 15 years.

And, in an upset, Italian swimmer Nicolo Martinenghi shocked record-holder Adam Peaty in the 100 breaststroke.

Peaty, the gold medalist in both Rio de Janeiro and Tokyo, had taken a long layoff to deal with mental health issues. Upon his return, he worked his way back up to speed and entered the final as the top qualifier but settled for silver as his quest for a third consecutive gold was ended.

US soccer wins

Sophia Smith scored a pair of goals to lead the U.S. past Germany 4-1 and put the team in good position to advance out of its group at the Olympics.

Mallory Swanson and Lynn Williams also scored for the Americans, who defeated Zambia 3-0 in the opener but won't know their fate in the knockout round for sure until after the final Group B matches on Wednesday.

The Americans play Australia in Marseille to conclude group play.

Mountain biker dedals

Batten broke a rule but still came home with America's best ever mountain biking finish when she won silver.

Batten was fined by the Olympic mountain bike judges for violating a rule on the final lap of her race. She was jockeying for second place when she went through a lane dedicated for taking on food and drink or stopping for mechanical problems.

After the judges reviewed the footage, they decided Batten had done neither and broke one of the rules of the race. She was fined 500 Swiss francs, or about $565, for "failure to respect the instructions of the race organization or commissaires," though the judges apparently decided that the infraction was not serious enough to warrant a disqualification.

Batten finished ninth three years ago at the Tokyo Games.

Tennis veterans win

Rafael Nadal was unsure he could even play men's singles Sunday the day before his match, but turned up at Roland Garros and beat Marton Fucsovics of Hungary 6-1, 4-6, 6-4 in the first round.

The victory set up a blockbuster showdown against rival Novak Djokovic.

It will be the 60th meeting between this pair of greats, more than any other two men have played against each other in the sport's Open era, which began in 1968. Djokovic, a 37-year-old from Serbia, leads the head-to-head series 30-29, and his 24 Grand Slam titles make him the only man in tennis history with more than Nadal's 22.

Andy Murray's tennis career, meanwhile, was extended for at least one more match when he and British partner Dan Evans saved five match points during a first-round doubles win. Murray and Evans rallied past the Japanese pair of Taro Daniel and Kei Nishikori 2-6, 7-6 (5), 11-9.

The Brits trailed 9-4 in the decisive tiebreaker, which is held in place of a third set in doubles.

The 37-year-old Murray announced before the Summer Games that it would be the final event of his career, and then pulled out of the singles bracket, leaving him only in doubles.

Murray is a three-time Grand Slam champion and the only tennis player with two Olympic singles golds—from London in 2012 and Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

Kwan leads Guardians comeback win over Phillies, 4-2

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Steven Kwan hit a go-ahead solo homer in the seventh inning after Jhonkensy Noel tied the score with a three-run shot in the fourth, and the Cleveland Guardians rallied for a 4-3 win over the Philadelphia Phillies on Sunday.

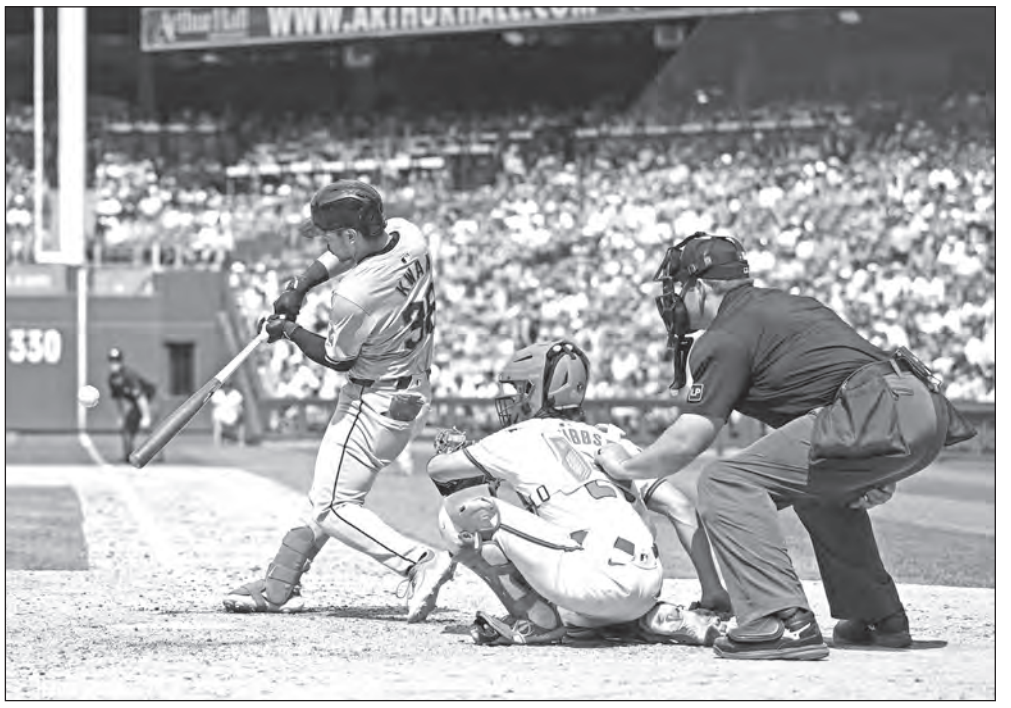
Kwan's 11th homer of the season came off lefty reliever Jose Alvarado (1-5) and helped Cleveland win two of three at Philadelphia. The Guardians won their 63rd game, tops in the American League, and trail only the Phillies (65) for most in the majors.

Kyle Schwarber homered twice for the Phillies off Cleveland rookie Joey Cantillo, a leadoff shot and a two-run homer in the fourth for a 3-0 lead.

Tim Herrin (4-0) got one out in the sixth. Emmanuel Clase retired Schwarber on a weak grounder as part of a scoreless ninth for his 33rd save. Cleveland's six relievers tossed one-hit shutout ball over the final 5 2/3 innings.

A potential World Series preview?

Perhaps - though not with the matchup of Cantillo vs. Philadelphia's Kolby Allard. Neither starter lasted beyond the fourth inning. Allard was called up from Triple-A Lehigh Valley to fill the injured Ranger Suarez's spot in the rotation.



AP

Cleveland Guardians' Steven Kwan, left, hits a solo home run off Philadelphia Phillies' José Alvarado during the seventh inning of a baseball game, Sunday, July 28, 2024, in Philadelphia.

RAYS 2, REDS 1

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP)—Tampa Bay took advantage of Cincinnati's bullpen to score twice in the eighth inning for a come-from-behind 2-1 win Sunday.

The Rays loaded the bases with two outs against the Reds. With one out, Reds reliever Fernando Cruz walked Yandy Diaz, Brandon Lowe reached on an infield single and Isaac Paredes walked.

Cruz struck out Amed Rosario, but catcher Austin Wynns could not handle the pitch and pinch runner Jose Caballero scored to tie the game. Lucas Sims came in to replace Cruz and walked Richie Palacios to score Lowe and give the Rays the 2-1 lead.

Garrett Cleavinger (7-2) pitched a scoreless eighth inning and Pete Fairbanks earned his 20th save of the season.

TIGERS 5, TWINS 0

DETROIT (AP)—Bailey Ober allowed one hit in eight scoreless innings, and Minnesota beat Detroit to win the weekend and season series.

Willi Castro and Manuel Margot each had three hits for the Twins, who went 2 for 15 with runners in scoring position. Minnesota won two of three to finish 7-6 against Detroit.

Ober (10-5) allowed a clean single to Matt Vierling to lead off the fourth and walked two batters while striking out a career-high 11. He is 3-0 with a 0.69 ERA in four starts against the Tigers this season.

Detroit, down to three healthy starting pitchers, got nine innings from its bullpen for the third time in six games. Opener Alex Faedo (5-2) allowed one run in one-plus innings.

CARDINALS 4, NATIONALS 3

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Paul Goldschmidt hit a game-ending homer in the ninth inning, and St. Louis beat Washington to snap a three-game skid.

Leading off the ninth, Goldschmidt hit a 2-2 sinker from Dylan Floro (3-3) into the left field stands for his 16th homer of the season and eighth career walk-off shot. It was the Cardinals' second walk-off win of the season and first since Nolan Gorman homered on April 22 against Arizona.

John King, Andrew Kittredge and Ryan Helsley (4-2) combined to pitch three innings of scoreless relief. Starter Miles Mikolas allowed three runs on seven hits in six innings.

MARINERS 6, WHITE SOX 3

CHICAGO (AP)—Cal Raleigh hit a two-run homer, Bryce Miller pitched 6 1-3 innings and Seattle completed a three-game sweep of Chicago to extend their losing streak to 14 games.

The trip to Chicago came at a good time for the Mariners, who had lost eight of nine games before beginning the series. The Mariners outscored the White Sox 22-6 over the three games.

Miller (8-7) allowed three runs on seven hits with seven strikeouts and did not allow a walk. Austin Voth got two outs in the seventh, Yimi Garcia pitched a scoreless eighth, and Andr√©s Mu√±oz closed the game with a scoreless inning in steady rain for his 18th save in 21 chances.

BLUE JAYS 7, RANGERS 3

TORONTO (AP)—Daulton Varsho homered in the first inning for the second straight game, Jose Berrios pitched seven sharp innings to snap a three-start winless streak and Toronto beat Texas to complete a three-game sweep of the defending World Series champions.

Vladimir Guerrero Jr. hit a solo home run, his fifth in nine games since the All-Star break, and drove in a pair as the Blue Jays earned their second sweep of the season. Toronto swept a three-game series against the White Sox from May 27-29.

Josh Smith hit a two-run homer but Texas lost its third straight after winning the previous five. The Rangers were swept for the fifth time, all on the road.

BRAVES 9, METS 2

NEW YORK (AP)—Matt Olson homered in consecutive games for the first time this season, and Atlanta overcame an injury to All-Star starter Reynaldo Lopez in a victory against New York.

Austin Riley, Orlando Arcia and Ramon Laureano also went deep for the Braves, who salvaged a four-game split after losing the first two games of the series. They hold the top National League wild card and moved 1 1/2 games ahead of New York for second place in the NL East.

Lopez pitched three shutout innings, lowering his major league-leading ERA to 2.06, before exiting with right forearm tightness. Atlanta already has a string of star players on the injured list.

ORIOLES 8, PADRES 6

BALTIMORE (AP)—Ryan Mountcastle hit a pair of two-run singles, Cedric Mullins made a terrific catch in centre field and Baltimore held off San Diego to snap their seven-game winning streak.

The Orioles scored six runs in the third, when their first six hitters reached base before Randy V√°squez (3-6) was pulled. By then, he'd already walked in a run, allowed an RBI single to Ryan O'Hearn and yielded a single by Mountcastle that made it 4-0.

Mullins hit a two-run double later that inning, and then the Orioles nearly blew their six-run lead. San Diego scored three runs in the fifth, and Xander Bogaerts hit a two-run homer the following inning.

CUBS 7, ROYALS 3

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Pete Crow-Armstrong, who came into the game hitting .183, was 3-for-4 with a run and the go-ahead RBI as Chicago defeated Kansas City.

The Cubs are 12-8 in their last 20 games after going 3-9 in their previous 12.

Javier Assad (5-3) allowed three runs on five hits in six innings.

Cole Ragans (7-7) took the loss, allowing four runs in 5 2/3 innings.

Michael Massey led off the first with a walk before Bobby Witt Jr. extended his hitting streak to 10 games with an infield single. With two outs, Hunter Renfroe lined one to centre, scoring both runners.

Nico Hoerner doubled in the third to tie it at 2-all.

DODGERS 6, ASTROS 2

HOUSTON (AP)—Teoscar Hernandez hit his 22nd home run, River Ryan struck out eight in his first major league win and Los Angeles beat Houston.

Gavin Lux and James Outman also homered and Shohei Ohtani stole his career-high 27th base for the Dodgers, who came into the game with a 1-7 road record in July.

With the Dodgers clinging to a 3-2 lead in the eighth, Hernandez turned on a slider from Bryan King and sent it 361 feet into the left field seats. Cavan Biggio extended the Dodgers lead with an RBI single to centre, scoring Lux, who had walked, to make it 5-2.

Jason Heyward tacked on another run with an RBI sacrifice fly in the ninth, scoring Ohtani.

BREWERS 6, MARLINS 2

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Xavier Edwards became the second Miami player ever to hit for the cycle, but Miami lost to Milwaukee Brewers, who got a homer and a triple from Jake Bauers.

Devin Williams, the two-time NL reliever of the year, worked a scoreless ninth inning for Milwaukee, allowing a hit and a walk in his first appearance of the season. He had been sidelined with stress fractures in his back.

Edwards led off the game with his first career homer, and he doubled in the fifth and tripled in the seventh. Needing a single for the cycle, the rookie beat out an infield hit with two outs in the ninth, finishing 4 for 4 with a walk. The only other Marlins player to hit for the cycle was Luis Arroz, who did it against Philadelphia on April 11, 2023.

PIRATES 6, DIAMONDBACKS 5, 10 INNINGS

PHOENIX (AP)—Ji Hwan Bae scored the go-ahead run on a wild pitch in Pittsburgh's four-run 10th inning, Joey Bart hit a tying run-scoring double in the ninth and the Pirates rallied to beat Arizona.

Arizona took a 2-1 lead into the ninth inning, only to see it fall apart.

Rowdy Tellez, who sat out Saturday night because of back spasms, entered in the ninth inning as a pinch hitter and led off with a double against Paul Sewald. Bart followed with a two-out double to tie it. The blown save was Sewald's fourth in 20 chances.

Bae opened the 10th inning with a bunt single and Justin Martinez (4-2) walked Yasmani Grandal to load the bases. After Arizona catcher Jose Herrera caught just enough of the plate to get a forceout - overturned on review - Martinez uncorked a wild pitch that scored the speedy Bae.

GIANTS 5, ROCKIES 4

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Matt Chapman and Jorge Soler each had three hits, and San Francisco finished off a four-game sweep of Colorado with a victory.

It was San Francisco's first four-game sweep since 2022. The Giants have beaten Colorado 12 straight times at home, tying a Rockies record for most consecutive losses at any opposing ballpark.

Trailing 5-3 heading into the ninth inning, the Rockies scored once and had the potential tying run at second base with one out against closer Camilo Doval. But then Sam Hilliard struck out and Ezequiel Tovar - who had three hits - grounded out to give Doval his 20th save.

ANGELS 8, ATHLETICS 6

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP)—Taylor Ward hit a grand slam to help erase an early 6-0 deficit, and Los Angeles beat Oakland to avoid a four-game sweep.

Ward's fourth-inning slam into the Oakland bullpen in left-centre off Osvaldo Bido (2-2) was the fourth of his career and the fourth by an Angel this season. His previous grand slam was on May 4, 2022, also against Oakland. He has 16 homers this season.

Brent Rooker hit a bases-clearing double in a six-run third inning for the A's, who had won eight of 10 and had already secured their fourth straight series win.

YANKEES 8, RED SOX 2

BOSTON (AP)—Carlos Rodon pitched into the seventh inning, Gleyber Torres hit a two-run single in New York's three-run first and they beat Boston to win a series for just the second time in their last 12 tries.

New York took the final two games of the three-game set against its longtime rival after blowing a late lead in the opener Friday night. It was the Yankees' first series win against Boston in three attempts this season.

Jazz Chisholm Jr. batted fifth, going 1 for 5 with a single, and played centre field in his Yankees debut after they acquired him from Miami for three minor leaguers Saturday.

2-night stay at Saipan Vegas grand raffle prize in Michelob Ultra Beer Mile

Run Saipan's Michelob Ultra Beer Mile set for Aug. 2 starting at 5:30pm at the picturesque Saipan Vegas Country Club will have a grand raffle prize of a two-night stay at Saipan Vegas with $25 in gaming tokens.

In addition, each finisher will receive a limited-edition beer mug and attendees will have the opportunity to win an array of other raffle prizes.

"Don't miss the opportunity to add this special mug to your collection. This exhilarating event also promises an evening of fun, fitness, and fantastic prizes, making it a must-attend for both beer enthusiasts and runners alike," said Run Saipan in a statement.

This year, Run Saipan is also thrilled to introduce the Corporate Relay event, where teams from various organizations can compete against each other in a spirited and friendly race. All proceeds from the Corporate Relay will be donated to the Saipan Humane Society, an organization dedicated to the welfare and protection of animals on the island.

The Saipan Humane Society is committed to promoting humane treatment and care of animals through education, advocacy, and sheltering services. By participating in the Michelob Ultra Beer Mile, participants are not only enjoying a unique running experience but also supporting a vital community cause.

Runners and teams can register for the event at Run Saipan Beer Mile registration. Spots are limited, so be sure to sign up soon to secure your place in this exciting event. https://raceroster.com/events/2024/83572/the-run-saipan-beer-mile-24.

Join Run Saipan for an unforgettable evening at the Saipan Vegas Country Club, where fitness and fun come together for a great cause. Run Saipan looks forward to seeing you there. ***(PR)***

RUN SAIPAN

Run Saipan mascot Gilligan poses with the limited-edition Michelob Ultra Beer Mile beer mug.

RUN SAIPAN

Run Saipan mascot Gilligan invites run and beer enthusiasts to join the Michelob Ultra Beer Mile set for Aug. 2 at the picturesque Saipan Vegas Country Club.

SWEEP

From page 16

In the NMI's second and final matchup against Guam, back-and-forth action resulted in nothing but near misses and mini-heart attacks from both ends—with fans' cheers and the beat of the drums in the backdrop of the fiery finale.

Both keepers—the NMI's Toremy Baek and Guam's Ahela'aoku'upu'uwai Kaae—had their work cut out for them, but both held up as the onslaught on their goals seemed to be nonstop—with goals inevitable at any time.

Then, before the end of the first half in the 41st minute the NMI's Jannah Casarino broke the ice as she made a light touch toward an open goal after an accurate pass by teammate Aubrey Castro. Casarino outpaced Guam's captain and as the keeper moved forward to block, Casarino kicked the ball toward the right side which slipped into the net faster than the defenders could stop it.

Gabrielle Race then got a goal off a header from a corner kick off Casarino in the 56th minute for a 2-0 lead. After that, Guam found an explosion of energy and just two minutes later, Cindy Maestrecampo found an opening to finally get them on the board, 1-2.

However, a case of mistaken identity caused a big blunder against Guam as Orung Santos shot an own goal in the 69th minute to give a 3-1 advantage for NMI.

From there, tensions were at an all-time high which brought about yellow cards upon both sides.

Then, after a foul on the NMI's Andrei Kaithlyn Chavez toward the end of the match, she squared up in the penalty box for another chance at the goal. Guam's keeper was no match as Chavez whizzed the fourth goal past her in the 86th minute for a 4-1 lead.

Five minutes were then added on the game clock after regulation, but Guam's exhaustion and frustration—while the NMI's electric energy and palpable victory didn't allow Guam much possession until time expired—and handed the championship to the NMI.

NMI head coach Luam Khen Koo said that the tourney was "overall very good."

On their sweep of it, he said, "CNMI soccer has improved a lot in the past few years and we've been preparing for this for quite some time."

As for their final game, he said, "We started the game with confidence because we just needed to get a winning result, and we knew that Guam will try to get a good result too."

To the fans, he said, "They have to come out more and enjoy, and support the local soccer. Thanks to all the fans that came out."

For Race, she said that the game was exciting. "I personally had a little bit of a slow start. I haven't played in a week but I think that the team played amazing and I think that we showed that we play together as a team—as one unit—and all of our hard work paid off."

On how she felt scoring a goal, she said, "It felt amazing. I'm not really a player that scores, but to score on a header was especially exciting."

In the tournament, she said the team played "amazing. The first game against Guam was a real tough one. They came back from being down 0-2, and won, 3-2, and I think it really shows our team spirit and that we don't give up.

The NMI Women's National Team with Casarino, Chavez, Race, Castro, and Baek, includes Deseha Mendiola, Christina Atalig, Dianne Pablo, Khristelle Itaas, Julie Chavez, Pia Ngewakl, Raven Anderson, Bernadette Horey, and Tamia Kileleman-Hix. The substitutes include Mariana Angeles, Megan Elayda, Sophia Quintos, Tyana Kileleman-Hix, Joselyn Atalig, and Toremy Baek.

Winners of the MVP, Golden Boot, and Golden Glove awards will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune.*

TRENCH

From page 16

ed in the featherweight division and went home with a no-gi bronze.

"My biggest take away from this competition was, I believe I am exactly where I should be, and when it's my turn to win am sure the time will come when I put in enough time and investment."

Taitingfong, meanwhile, salvaged a bronze in the lightweight class.

"My biggest takeaway was returning to the competition stage after six years and deciding to compete two weeks out. Their skill level was good but I am not too far from getting back in to competition shape," said the 26-year-old police K9 handler and U.S. Army reservist.

Alvarez congratulated Team Trench Tech for giving their all in the 2024 Marianas Pro Korea Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu No-Gi Tournament, considering it's been five years since his students had any semblance of actual competition.

"I am just happy that they went and competed. The last time we went as a full team (adults) to compete was in 2019 in Japan. This past event in Korea, there were only four of them, but this is a definitely a revamped prelude of more team travels to come."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Baelen Song, right, took home the bronze medal in the no-gi featherweight division.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Giovonni Taitingfong, right, salvaged the bronze medal in the no-gi lightweight division.

TRYOUTS

From page 16

made up of Lizama, Basa, Schmidt, and Dan Barcinas.

For more information on the tryouts, contact nmibasketballfederation@gmial.com.

Call for weightlifters for 2025 Mini Games in Palau

LEIGH GASES

First-time Micro Games athlete and gold medalist, Kaya Rasa attempts a lift in her division of the 2024 Micronesian Games in Majuro, Marshall Islands.

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Weightlifting Federation is calling on interested weightlifters to compete in the 2025 Pacific Mini Games in Koror, Palau.

CNMI Weightlifting Federation president and coach John Davis said that if they can fill every weight category, they will try to send a full team of 20 lifters.

Interested lifters, in order to make the cut for the team, must lift the weight above a minimum standard.

The criteria beyond lifting will be discussed at a time before training starts.

The Pacific Mini Games is slated for June 29-July 9, 2025 in Koror, Palau.

In the 2022 Pacific Mini Games held in the NMI, the NMI National Weightlifting Team bagged 11 gold, nine silver, and three bronze medals.

After, in the 2023 Pacific Games held at Honiara, Solomon Islands, the team won one gold, two silver, and one bronze medal.

For the recently concluded 2024 Micronesian Games in Majuro, Marshall Islands, the weightlifting team brought home three gold, five silver, and four bronze.

Email cnmiweightlifting@gmail.com no later than Aug. 31 for inquiries.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Baltimore	62	43	.590	–
New York	62	45	.579	1
Boston	55	49	.529	6½
Tampa Bay	54	52	.509	8½
Toronto	49	56	.467	13
Central Division				
Cleveland	63	42	.600	–
Minnesota	58	46	.558	4½
Kansas City	57	49	.538	6½
Detroit	52	55	.486	12
Chicago	27	81	.250	37½
West Division				
Houston	55	50	.524	–
Seattle	56	51	.523	–
Texas	51	55	.481	4½
Los Angeles	46	60	.434	9½
Oakland	44	64	.407	12½

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	65	40	.619	–
Atlanta	56	48	.538	8½
New York	55	50	.524	10
Washington	49	57	.462	16½
Miami	39	67	.368	26½
Central Division				
Milwaukee	60	45	.571	–
St. Louis	54	51	.514	6
Pittsburgh	53	52	.505	7
Chicago	51	56	.477	10
Cincinnati	50	55	.476	10
West Division				
Los Angeles	63	44	.589	–
San Diego	57	51	.528	6½
Arizona	55	51	.519	7½
San Francisco	53	55	.491	10½
Colorado	38	69	.355	25

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Durant returns to US lineup, scores 23 points to lead win over Serbia

PAGE 13

Saipan Tribune
Sports

2-night stay at Saipan Vegas grand raffle prize in Michelob Ultra Beer Mile

PAGE 15

NMI beats Guam to complete sweep

LEIGH GASES

The NMI's Jannah Casarino gets tangled up with a Guam player and tumble together during a heated exchange in the final minutes of their last matchup in the NMIFA Women's U21 Three Nations Cup at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville last Sunday.

LEIGH GASES

The NMI Women's National Team poses for a group photo with Northern Mariana Islands Football Association executive committee members during the awards ceremony of the NMIFA Women's U21 Three Nations Cup at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville last Sunday.

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The NMI Women's National Team successfully completed the sweep of the NMIFA Women's U21 Three Nations Cup after they won all four matches at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Their final hurrah was against Guam last Sunday night as they put up a dominating 4-1 win in an intense matchup that brought out emotion and passion from both sides.

With this final, the NMI scored 10 total goals in four games to claim the championship. Guam came in second with seven goals and an even 2-2 record, while Mongolia scored a goal and lost all four matches to both Guam and the NMI.

See SWEEP on Page 15

Trench Tech Gym wins 4 medals in Korea BJJ tourney

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
EDITOR

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Trench Tech's Kier Agda, left, on the podium after finishing with the silver medal in the heavyweight division 2024 Marianas Pro Korea Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu No-Gi Tournament held last June 16 in Seoul, South Korea.

The four-man Trench Tech Gym delegation acquitted themselves well in the 2024 Marianas Pro Korea Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu No-Gi Tournament held last June 16 in Seoul, South Korea.

Sensei Justis "Cuki" Alvarez said Kier Agda, Baelen Song, and Giovonni Taitingfong all went home with medals. The fourth member of the team is Jason Artero.

"Overall, the team did great. Four competitors in total went, and three of them medaled. I believe Kier Agda had the 'best performance' because he won medals in two divisions—gi and no gi," he said.

Agda competed in the adult blue belt heavyweight division and bagged a silver medal in the no-gi and a bronze in gi.

"My biggest takeaway from this tourney was the different styles/paces of jiu jitsu players that I went up against. Realizing that there will always be someone faster, stronger, and better than you. Those athletes make you better. That's why when you train you always got to put in the honest work and train like you'll fight. Another great experience in the books. We had fun and laid it all on the line. On to the next!" said the 25-year-old parachute rigger at Skydive Saipan and ground-handler at Micronesian Air Cargo.

Song, for his part, compet-

See TRENCH on Page 15

Tryouts for 3x3 hoops Mini Games team

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

LEIGH GASES

Douglas Schmidt in action during a game in the Marianas Arsenal 3x3 Basketball Series championship last February at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. This Thursday and Friday, the Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation is hosting tryouts for a 23U men's and 23U women's 3x3 basketball team for the 2025 Pacific Mini Games in Palau.

This Thursday and Friday, the Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation is hosting tryouts for a 23U men's and 23U women's 3x3 basketball team for the 2025 Pacific Mini Games in Palau.

The tryouts will be held at the Koblerville Gymnasium at 5:30pm on both days.

Players have to be between 18-23 years old, must be born in the CNMI, and have a U.S. passport.

The Pacific Mini Games 3x3 is following FIBA rules and regulations.

The Pacific Mini Games is slated for June 29-July 9, 2025 in Koror, Palau.

The last 3x3 competition that NMI competed in was the 3x3 FIBA Asia Cup in Singapore last March.

The women's team was made up of Kaia Travilla, Jan Travilla, Mikki Kautz, and Madeleine Alegre, while the men's team consisted of Preston Basa, Jack Lizama, Douglas "Spider" Schmidt, and Coby Santos.

Before that, the last time the NMI joined a 3x3 competition in a Pacific Mini Games was in 2017 in Vanuatu. It was

See TRYOUTS on Page 15